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ABSTRACT

The effectiveness of flexible learning systems at the Tea Tree Gully Campus (TTGC) of the Torrens Valley Institute of Technical and Further Education in Australia was examined in a 2-year longitudinal study. Data were collected from 199 interviews and 696 questionnaires completed by TTGC students and staff during 1992 and 1993. Among the main study findings were the following: (1) although students' primary reason for attending TTGC remained location rather than open learning, there has been a gradual increase in acceptance of the advantages of a more flexible learning system; (2) there remains a need for selected conventional education activities; (3) despite initial problems, there has been a progressive maturation of the open learning system's management system; and (4) ongoing staff professional development and further research into issues related to students realizing their potential within a flexible learning environment are needed. (Contains a 52-item annotated bibliography and a 43-item general bibliography. Appended are the following: list of initiatives arising from the national training reform agenda; TTGC mission statement, charter, education and productivity rationale, and staffing structure; project schedule; interview questions and questionnaires; comparison of 1992 and 1993 survey responses; sample specific performance indicators; and 1994 team performance agreements.) (MN)

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JUDI BARON
DIANNE THIELE
ERNST HINTZ

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NCVER

Adelaide 1995

The future is not some place we are going to, but one we are creating. The paths to it are not found but made, and the making of these pathways changes both the maker and the destination.

Kirby, P, 1986, 'Passing of a Golden Age', *In Future*, Commission of the Future.

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The members of the Advisory Committee provided ongoing advice and support during the life of the project. The authors thank the members of the Advisory Committee for their support, ideas and positive encouragement with special mention of Uni Carnegie who volunteered her time and expertise.

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Executive summary

Under the auspices of the National Centre for Vocational Education and Research (NCVER), the research team from the University of South Australia undertook a two-year longitudinal study of flexible learning systems at Tea Tree Gully Campus of the Torrens Valley Institute of TAFE. Flexible learning systems are ways in which learner-centred approaches can be used to promote flexibility and choice within the curriculum. A total of 199 interviews were conducted and 696 questionnaires were received from both students and staff during the study.

In brief, the research offered the following results:

- Although the primary reason for attending the Tea Tree Gully Campus was location rather than open learning, there has been a gradual increase in acceptance of the advantages of a more flexible system. It was observed that there was greater learner independence and that learners progressed at a faster rate than initially expected. The increased autonomy was not always viewed positively which may have been due, in part, to a lack of adequate support for some learners. Linked to this, the profile of students who responded in the second year of operation of the college differed from those of the first year. With a higher proportion of feedback from full-time students under 20 years of age in the second year, the researchers noted an increased need for additional orientation and support.

- There remains a need for conventional education activities such as introductory lectures, workshops and on-going tutorials within a flexible learning environment.

- Ongoing student support from both staff and fellow students can assist learners, especially those who recently completed high school in a conventional setting, to adapt to innovative learning systems and more fully benefit from them.

- Although the use of group work proved largely successful, there were problems with the cohesion of groups, group dynamics, expectations of 'who should lead,' and differing multi-cultural perceptions of the value of group work.

- Evidence has shown there is ongoing commitment to empowering the learner. The change to the team-oriented management style has supported this commitment.

- There were initial difficulties with various structures which existed in the Department of Education, Training and Further Education (DETAFE) during the implementation of flexible learning systems.

- Choice was not always evident, for example, in multiple entry/exit; recognition of prior learning; mandatory on-campus attendance (even though this was not part of TTGs original charter), assessment, etc. As a result the concept of 'choice' needs to be defined within the given educational and administrative parameters.

- There has been a progressive maturation of the management system at the Tea Tree Gully Campus which has culminated in the annual exercise of writing team performance agreements.

- There exists the need for ongoing staff professional development fitting the ideal of the worker and lifelong learning.

- There is also the need for further research into issues such as age, gender, and the motivation and self-confidence of students in realising their potential within a flexible learning environment.

In sum, the research team concludes that the Tea Tree Gully Campus community has been on an impressive journey of educational development—one which is very much still in progress.

Preface: In search of Oz

The travellers in *The Wizard of Oz*, the work which Frank Baum penned over a century ago, received instructions simply to 'follow the yellow brick road', that is stick to the path that leads to your life's ideal, or simply put, follow your dream. The journey to open learning and flexible learning systems is as much a journey of self discovery as it is a quest for an educational ideal. For like Dorothy, the Scarecrow, Tinman and Lion, it is the journey that reveals their capacity to achieve their aims by challenging them—and in so doing leads to their awareness that the journey, not the goal, makes all the difference.

Though not quite a tornado, the national training reform agenda did turn things around—if not upside down—in vocational education in Australia (see Appendix A for a listing of the initiatives arising from the national training reform agenda). It clearly brought changes to the landscape and learning environment at the Tea Tree Gully Campus. This is particularly true of flexible learning, which aims to empower individuals to gain a measure of control over what, how, where and even when they can and do learn. Even though the campus has successfully implemented many components of flexible delivery since its commencement at its new site in 1992, it is still not fully 'open'. Indeed, one recalls the journey through the dark forests surrounding the land of Oz. For instance, only one or two courses to date are to be offered at a distance, entry times are still quite rigid in some program areas, and recognition of prior learning and computer-based learning are still developing. Furthermore, the assessment program remains inflexible in some areas, attendance is still mandatory on campus with a log-on system, and self-paced learning remains restricted within some program areas and subjects. Yet, the travellers are finding their way and things are evolving for the better.

In fact, you may consider this report an interpretation and evaluation of the journey of students and staff towards the realisation of flexible learning in vocational education. In doing so, we will first of all look at the philosophy behind the establishment of what was originally called the Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE and then look at how students and staff responded to the provision of flexible learning—and a curriculum that strives to open new possibilities for gaining vocational skills. This report, then, must tell of the barriers which learners—both students and staff—had to confront in adapting to new approaches. Its aim is to provide some evidence that the flexible learning environment at Tea Tree Gully campus empowers students to gain some control over their learning. As such it is very much a journey of struggle and discovery.

1 Beginning of the journey

Initial charter

DETAFE generally is increasingly concerned with creating learner-centred environments and the Tea Tree Gully Campus of the newly formed Torrens Valley Institute of Vocational Education, in particular, is dedicated to the development of self-directed, skilled learners who are responsive to the changing needs of society. It has adopted flexible learning systems as a response to recent industry restructuring and has as its primary focus the production of more graduates in identified areas of skilled shortage in a more cost-efficient manner, as well as a greater involvement of industry in training.

The initial charter was to adopt innovative learning strategies and includes:

- the use of innovative methodologies and delivery systems
- the use of open learning strategies
- the use of student-centred learning strategies
- the use of self-directed learning

(See Appendix B for the Mission Statement and charter for the campus including elements of student-centred learning.)

In 1992 the first year of operation at its present site the Tea Tree Gully Campus was 60% functional, rising to 80% in 1993. By 1994 it had increased to 100% with more than 3000 students enrolled.

Clarification of the jargon

The term 'open learning' can mean many things to many people. On the one hand it can convey the essential elements of student-centred learning as described above. On the other hand the term can imply increasing educational access either through the use of learning centres or the use of distance education materials which may or may not be based on instructional design which is compatible with the principles of student-centred learning.

Location

South Australia is the fifth largest of Australia's eight States and Territories and has a population of 1.4 million. Tea Tree Gully Campus is situated in one of South Australia's most rapidly growing regions. It is located on a 5.5 hectare site in close

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proximity to a major hospital, one of metropolitan Adelaide's largest retail and service centres, a range of federal, state and local government offices, and the O'bahn guided busway system—giving a swift, smooth 20 minute ride to the central business district of Adelaide.

The buildings have won architectural awards. Just as the students and staff are adopting a flexible approach to learning the inner walls of the buildings are 'flexible'. One of the architectural design objectives was to maximise flexibility in the arrangement and servicing of internal spaces. Many of the interior divisions are not fixed. They can be changed as the need arises. Every fourth tile is a 'hot' tile with telephone, power and computer cabling.

There are co-operative ventures with the community of Tea Tree Gully. For example the library is jointly owned by the Tea Tree Gully College and the Council of Tea Tree Gully. The gymnasium is managed by the YMCA with students receiving first priority for booking purposes.

There are four learning assistance centres (LACs) or resource-based learning centres located close to student work areas. These have been set up to provide access to the students to use videos, cassette tapes, books etc.

2 In pursuit of flexible delivery

What is it?

Flexible delivery is an overall approach to vocational education and training that allows for the adoption of a range of learning strategies in a variety of learning environments to cater for differences in learning styles, learning interests and needs, and variations in learning opportunities.

We may characterise flexible delivery in terms of entry, program components, modes of learning, assessment, and points of exit. Learners may ideally control and choose the content, sequence, time, place and method of learning and are supported by the appropriate learner-support systems and technologies.

Flexible delivery also includes a wide variety of particular approaches. Among them we find competency-based learning, resource and activity-based learning, workplace education, video and teleconferencing, self-paced learning, and computer-managed learning.

Flexible delivery and Tea Tree Gully Campus

The definitions above of flexible delivery come from the Flexible Delivery Working Party in Queensland in 1992. The central tenet of Tea Tree Gully's innovative teaching and learning systems is the principle of student-centred learning. In fact the 'catch-cry' of 1994 is 'We do not succeed until you (the student) do'. This phrase emblazons the current publicity material.

As of 1 July 1993 the Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE merged with Gilles Plains College of TAFE (which incorporated the Brookway Park and Cheltenham Campuses) to form the Torrens Valley Institute of TAFE. Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE began operations at the present site on Smart Road, Modbury, South Australia in January 1992. The South Australian Department of Employment, Training and Further Education (TAFE), and its Commonwealth counterpart, the Department of Employment, Education, and Training (DEET), have used the commissioning of Tea Tree Gully Campus as an opportunity to create a new post-secondary educational institution with a rationale and a mission based on 'open learning' principles and methodologies.

Why?

Tea Tree Gully Campus chose to pursue the development of self-directed, skilled learners who are responsive to the changing needs of society. In doing so, it has adopted flexible learning systems as a response to the national industry restructuring. The primary focus is to produce more graduates in identified areas of skills' shortage in a more cost-efficient manner and to involve industry to a greater extent in training. In some program areas such as Hair and Beauty and in Electronics, industry involvement is already significant.

How?

Tea Tree Gully Campus has adopted an approach to learning which places the student rather than the teacher at the centre. The campus has focussed on producing graduates who are immediately employable, self-directed and skilled learners. Indeed, the campus has nine vocational program areas, all committed to the vision of flexible delivery. These areas include:

- business/commercial studies
- clothing and textiles
- computing and information systems
- community services
- design arts
- electronics
- hairdressing and cosmetology
- hospitality
- preparatory education

Management

Every journey needs direction. So, how about the management of such an undertaking? Tea Tree Gully's style of management is participative, that is to say all members of the staff are invited to have input into the decision making process and to a consensus whenever possible. Thus, the campus has developed a much flatter, and accessible management structure that emphasises self-managing teams (see Appendix C for the Educational and productivity rationale for the Tea Tree Gully Campus and Appendix D for the 1992-93 staffing structure).

There are some thirteen self-managing teams each with its own performance agreement and associated budget. The performance agreements are written in clear outcome terms and are negotiated with management. They provide the framework within which the self-managing team operates. The campus objective in adopting this open and devolved management style is to model what it

wants to happen in the learning environment. In so doing the campus becomes more responsive to the needs of the learner.

In Australia as in the United States of America and other developed countries around the world, industry and the workplace are changing—rearranged like the tornado-struck Kansas farm in the *Wizard of Oz*. As a result of the upheaval the scenery no longer looks the same. For instance, more highly skilled jobs require higher-order thinking skills. The problem has been that many of the skills that students learn in school are not preparing them for a journey that requires higher-level thinking and problem solving. Flexible learning systems such as those incorporated at Tea Tree Gully Campus reflect an effort to incorporate the learning of problem-solving and analytical skills and reinforce basic communication and interpersonal skills. More specifically, for new workers to enter successfully and remain in the contemporary workplace, a high level of industry specific, enterprise skills are needed. These skills—referred to as 'key competencies'—are:

- collecting, analysing and organising information
- communicating ideas and information
- planning and organising activities
- working with others and in teams
- using mathematical ideas and techniques
- solving problems
- using technology (Mayer, 1992)

The term enterprise skills was used by Tea Tree Gully before the Mayer key competencies became known. To avoid confusion Tea Tree Gully has recently adopted the Mayer terminology at the expense of enterprise skills.

Tea Tree Gully's enterprise skills were:

- identifying and solving problems
- communicating effectively in written and oral form
- planning and organising work and time efficiently
- working as part of a team
- showing initiative
- accessing and using information
- adapting to constant change

Telling about the journey: The purpose of the study

Together with the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), the research team from the University of South Australia undertook a two year longitudinal study of flexible learning systems at the Tea Tree Gully Campus of the Torrens Valley Institute of Vocational Education (see Appendix E for the time schedule for the project).

The purpose of the study was to describe and evaluate the implementation of flexible learning systems, that is, the ways in which these systems combined learner-centred approaches to promote flexibility and choice within the requirements of a curriculum. You will find that it is an evaluative study into the impact of Tea Tree Gully Campus flexible learning provision on all those who took part in the journey—students, staff, and management.

In keeping with the 'journey' metaphor, this study explored the educational philosophy of *openness* at the campus so as to help identify and overcome barriers to this philosophy, be they geographical, personal or institutional. Indeed, the areas of 'openness' which we in the research team considered were the use of new and different educational methods, in this case, the provision of appropriate courses of study with efficient and cost effective delivery; the focus on student-centred learning and self-directed learning materials, as well as the integrating of technology into adult learning practices. You will also note that the study considers further factors such as student support mechanisms and the adoption of a 'flatter management' system at the Tea Tree Gully Campus.

But what was the game plan for getting the study underway and keeping it on track?

The roadmap: A methodological overview

You will find the research methods we used in this study were within the empirical-interpretive tradition, whereby interviews and questionnaires provide information for both qualitative and quantitative analysis (see Appendix F for a summary of the number of questionnaires and interviews conducted). The analytical process was a protracted one and evolved in concert with the development of flexible learning at Tea Tree Gully Campus over the length of the study itself. As a process the research sought to integrate critically the evolving views of students and staff, teaching and non-teaching staff alike, into a representation of the journey, namely, of how flexible learning has been implemented at the campus in a variety of contexts. These contexts range from students' and staff's adaptation to the learning environment, their responses to the curriculum and required competencies, and the difficulties they perceived in the implementation within the changing andragogical and administrative climate of the campus.

To accomplish these aims, the research team interviewed the inaugural group of students (called student group,1992) in the new flexible learning program at the campus. The information from these interviews informed the design of questionnaires that this student group completed. We used the same procedures for the next group of students (student group 1993) to be enrolled the following year. Follow-up interviews and questionnaires were

given to each of these two groups. The research team followed the same procedure for the Tea Tree Gully Campus teaching and non-teaching staff. Moreover, three interim reports submitted to a committee composed of the research team, a representative from the NCVER, an independent educational representative and the Tea Tree Gully Campus management provided ongoing feedback and positive critique. Additional feedback came directly from students and staff alike on numerous occasions in which they and the researchers interacted formally and informally over the course of the journey.

3 Expectations of the journey: Pre-arrival perspectives of students and staff

Educational backgrounds and prior perspectives

Whether pursuing the *Wizard of Oz* or an educational goal, one approaches a new journey by having arrived from somewhere else. In the case of the students at Tea Tree Gully Campus, the study interviewed a group of 85 students who began the initial trek in 1992 (see Appendix G for the student interview questions). Although gender-related questions were not a fundamental part of the study, we noted that 48 were female and 37 male. The selection of these students to interview could not be based on attaining gender parity, but rather on the availability and willingness of students to take part in the study and to tell us about their journey. Moreover, in the majority of cases responses were audio-taped and those interviewed were pleased to provide the research team with their names and contact address for the follow-up interviews to come in a year's time. We were also curious about finding out about the major issues and concerns of the second group of students (student group 1993), who commenced their vocational studies in the second year of operation at the campus. Out of this group, a total of 63 out of 618 were interviewed.

So what were the questions? We asked three types about:

- educational background
- prior perceptions of the Tea Tree Gully Campus and open learning
- present perceptions

The third type looked at the campus' learning methodology—'student centredness'—in terms of key competencies; resource-based learning; student support and ergonomics.

Initial student interviews

Student group 1992

The findings from student group 1992 told us that most of the students came from a traditional learning environment and the main reason for choosing TTG—our abbreviation for the campus from here on—was 'location', that is, the proximity to home or work, or both, and not because of the flexible learning systems available. Indeed, few students were even aware of such systems

before commencing their studies. Moreover, most students did not seek information via counselling prior to enrolment and had little knowledge of the services offered by Student Support Services. For some students, there were also problems with AUSTUDY, which denied them the continuation of payments because they were taking longer in the self-paced learning environment to complete their courses than the 'norm'. That is to say, AUSTUDY entitlements were being based on the minimum time required to complete a course.

We found that most students interviewed in student group 1992 were impressed with the knowledge, skills, industry expertise of the facilitators (that is, lecturers or teachers). Though students found the facilitators to be friendly and approachable, a fairly common comment was the relatively lengthy waiting time required to get a facilitator's assistance. It was apparent that both teaching staff and students alike needed to accustom themselves to a new system, new expectations, and new ways of doing things. Indeed, it became clear that the transition from conventional lecturer to 'facilitator' could be every bit as daunting as that which traditionally-minded students faced in becoming open and flexible learners.

In addition, there was disparity between program and subject areas on the quality of feedback from facilitators. Students distinguished between 'hard' and 'soft' feedback, for example, 'hard' constituted marks and comments on work, whereas 'soft' was regarded as encouragement and assurance that the students were 'on the right track'.

The majority of students recognised the importance of enterprise skills to the work situation and most used and extended them at some stage in their studies at TTG.

Students, however, were concerned with:

- the Learning Assistance Centres (LACs), that is, with the opening hours
- lack of textbooks in some subjects
- borrowing conditions

In most cases, the research team noted the following:

- most subjects had learning objectives well stated
- students felt they were actively participating in the learning environment
- students could not choose their starting date

Of the two levels of orientation offered to students—the general college-wide one and the specific program one—the former was not highly regarded. That is to say, the general orientation did not lead to the Yellow Brick Road as the many students did not know what

they were seeking and could not yet ask what they would need to know along the way.

> *I would like to see more help for students who feel insecure and lost in the beginning.* (Student, 1993)

> *Students entering into self-paced learning require a longer introduction to understand the requirements and demands of it.* (Student, 1993)

We also found there was an expressed need for 'introductory lectures' to set the scene and to give background information on starting a new subject. Further, some students were even concerned about the lack of consolidation—they successfully passed each module but felt they were missing the bigger picture or general overview.

Now that the research team was informed of the issues about which students were concerned, it could prepare the questionnaire to trace their progress. Let us discuss the expectations of the other travellers along the road—student group 1993 as well as the teaching and non-teaching staff.

Student group 1993

In addition to those inaugural students of student group 1992 we first interviewed, a second student group of students who commenced their vocational studies in the second year of TTG's operation were interviewed—a total of 63 out of 618. We enquired into the expectations of the journey held by this group according to program areas. In doing so, we undertook profiles about gender, age, study mode, AUSTUDY, employment, and year level of leaving school (see Appendix H for the interview questions).

The general findings were that the students of student group 1993 enjoyed the open learning environment with more positive responses than those students interviewed at the same time in the previous year, and with less problems of insufficient resources. As with the previous student group, however, there were some concerns with the computer management system which students found inflexible (attendance on-campus required to log on) and not user friendly. There was no open learning perception of the choice of starting date by any students interviewed as all viewed the starting date in a traditional timeframe. Nor did students give much indication of receiving recognition of prior learning. Further, many whom we interviewed felt it was too early to comment on feedback, most believing feedback to be 'assessment':

> *The feedback given is useful but no marks are given. You don't need to try as hard with no grades.* (Student, 1992)

Others, however, correlated the usefulness of the feedback relative to the availability of the facilitators. As with the earlier student group the major response of student group 1993 for choosing TTG

was also location to home/work, and not the learning environment. Indeed, very few had heard much about it and were expecting a more traditional setting.

We also discovered further perceptions of interest. For instance, some students were having trouble joining informal groups and would have preferred facilitators to do the selection whereas other students preferred to work alone as they felt group work hindered self pacing.

An interesting light is shed on group work in the following comment:

> *As an older person with management experience, I have found that I am expected to lead groups and the lack of clear hierarchal structure impedes leadership. But, tutors do not appreciate this subtle difference and I feel that I am penalised because of it. On one occasion I was held back because the group leader was young and unable to delegate. Again, the tutor was unable to appreciate and compensate.* (Student, 1993)

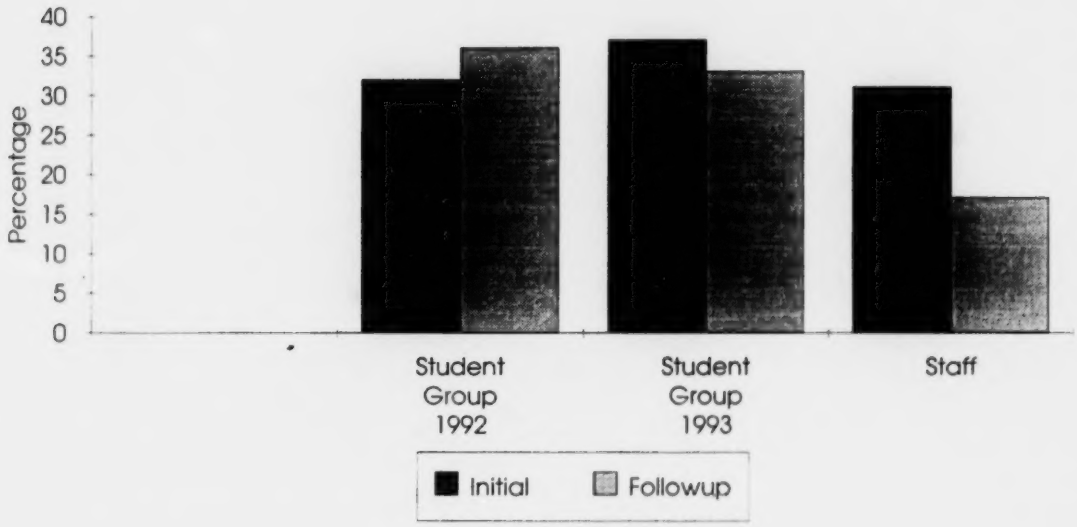
Very few had an awareness of the services provided by Student Services. Those who had used them did so mainly for financial advice such as AUSTUDY and student loans. Further, the majority found the general orientation a 'waste of time' or too long with important areas rushed including the general principles of flexible delivery. In fact, some students considered that some parts of the orientation would be of more benefit later in the term once they had settled into their new learning environment and were more aware of its operations.

Finally, the research team also asked students in student group 1993 whether they had choice over what they learned and in which order they learned. The responses varied according to the program areas and no generalisation could be made.

Students responded to ten specific questions relating to the perceived flexibility of their current learning environment including the extent of control over what and how they learn (including the content, style of learning, place of study, time of study and pace of study); group work; educational technologies used; competencies; enterprise skill development and involvement in active assessment.

In all these areas assessed by the Likert Scales there was a definite indication that the students of student group 1993 felt there was increasing flexibility in the learning environment. (see Appendix I for comparison of 1992 and 1993 Likert Scales).

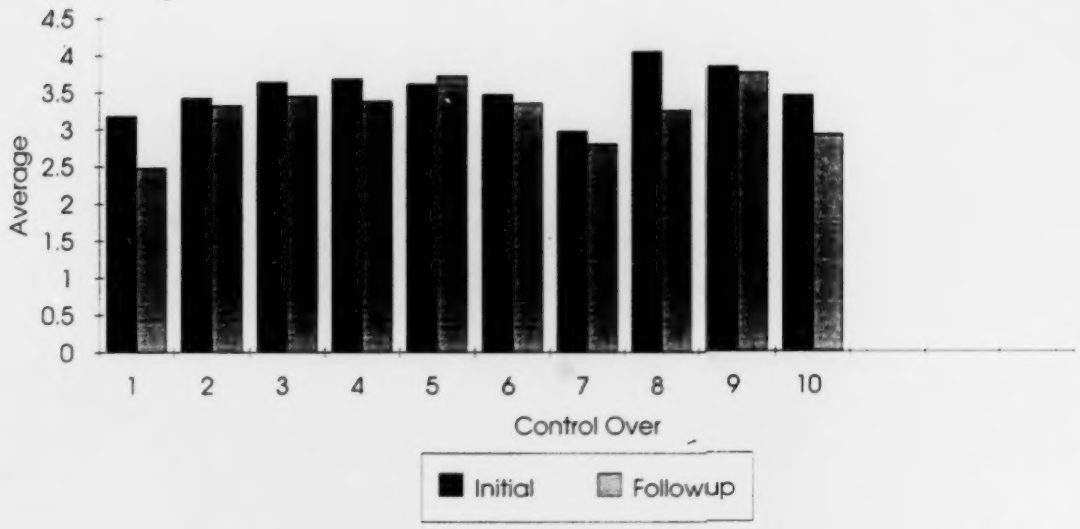
Response rates comparison
Interviews and questionnaires



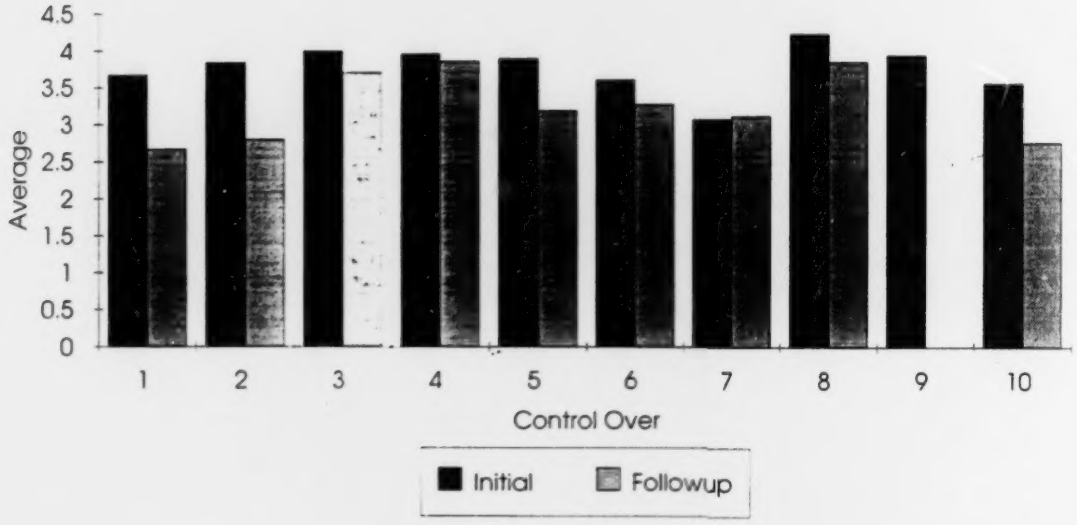
Key to bar graphs

1	Control over content
2	Control over style of learning
3	Control over place of study
4	Control over time of study
5	Control over pace of study
6	Group work
7	Educational media used
8	Required competencies clear?
9	Development of enterprise skills
10	Involved in active assessment

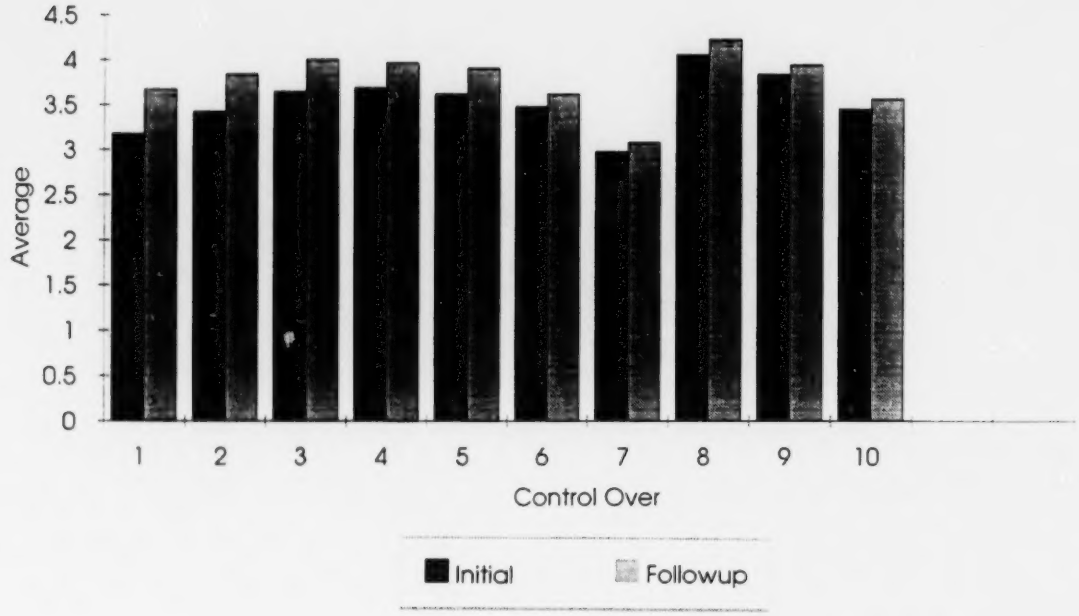
Student Group 1992 initial and follow-up
Response to control over



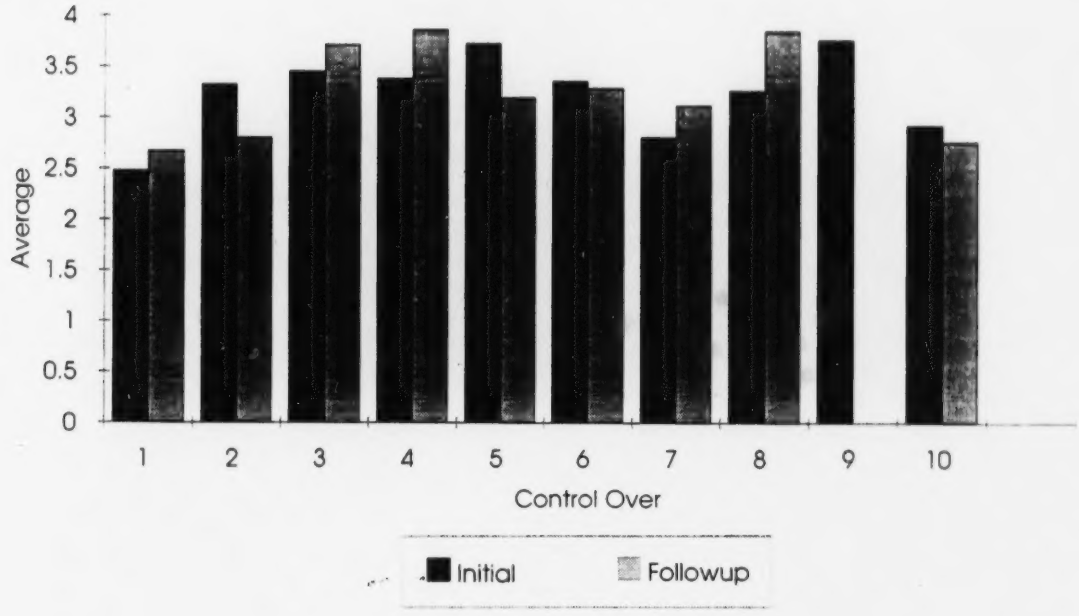
Student Group 1993 initial and follow-up
Response to control over



Initial student questionnaires
1992 and 1993—comparison of control



Follow-up student questionnaires
1992 and 1993—comparison of control



Initial staff interviews

Both teaching and non-teaching staff were initially interviewed in late 1992 (13 teaching and 9 non-teaching, 22 in total). (See Appendix J for a list of the questions asked). Staff (both teaching and non-teaching) had on average four years of experience in an 'open learning' environment, prior to joining TTG Campus, during which time they either worked in or had a strong interest in an open learning environment. Most staff viewed flexible learning positively although they also considered that there is still a long way to go to realise the potential of flexible learning more fully at the Tea Tree Gully Campus. Those staff interviewed provided very comprehensive comments on three major issues—staffing, management, and the learners. It is to be noted that the following observations may not be opinions held by all staff at the campus, but we consider that the comments are important to mention in this report.

Staff believe that flexible learning has generally brought about greater independence, and at a faster rate than initially expected, including students choosing their own alternative places to learn. Interestingly, when later surveyed in 1993, some staff did appear to shift their perception from a positive response to one of 'abuse of the system', especially in relation to students who were not succeeding in the flexible learning environment.

Yet, in the main, staff found that students appeared to be interacting successfully with the learning environment—even with the belief of some staff that flexible learning means harder work for the student. Concerns that we noted were: the problem of learners knowing who to approach for particular types of queries and assistance; some social isolation between students while others use the campus as a social arena; lack of opportunity for students to demonstrate to potential employers their competency skills; need for a stronger orientation phase to open learning, for example, self-pacing does not work equally well for all students. Moreover, facilitators were being told by students: 'I came here to learn and you're not teaching me anything.' This comment was reinforced by student interviews. In regard to inability to demonstrate competencies to employers, it is noteworthy that this is a concern of many vocational institutions—not just Tea Tree Gully Campus.

But how did these groups fare during the journey? To find out we need to look at the initial questionnaires given to students and staff after they were underway.

4 'We're off!' Learning to become flexible

Initial student questionnaires

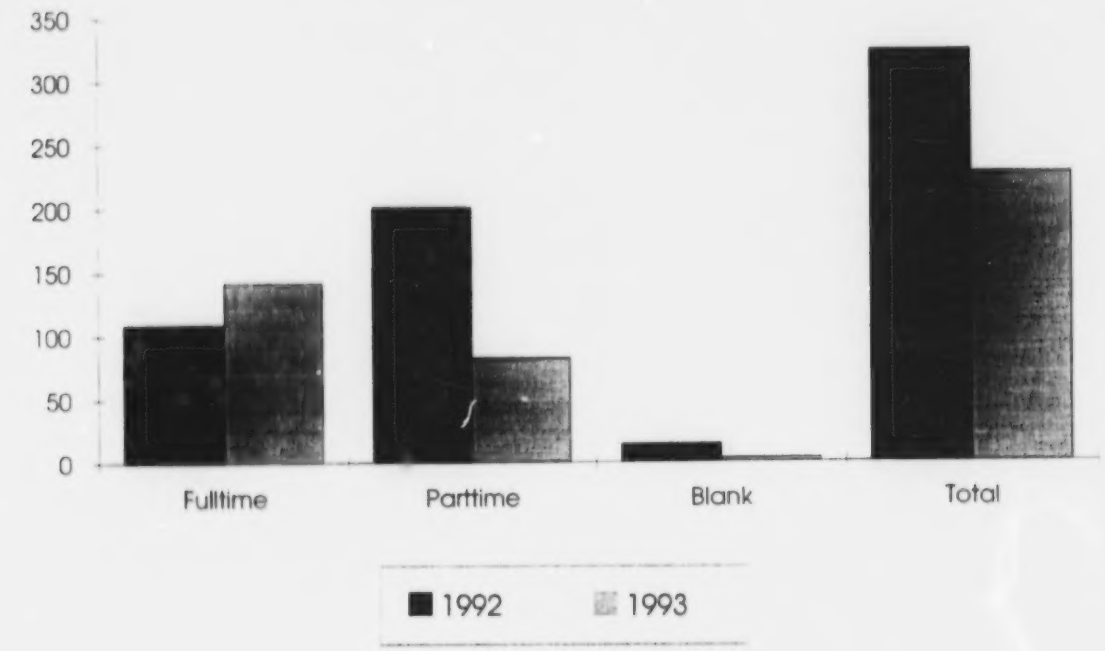
On the basis of in-depth student interviews, we prepared the initial student questionnaire for student group 1992—in fact, the same questionnaire given later to student group 1993 (see Appendix K). We then distributed it to all students within the nine vocational program areas. The issues identified were:

- AUSTUDY entitlements
- recognition of prior learning (RPL)
- the need for introductory lectures and workshops
- faculty advisors
- student control over learning
- the appeal of flexible delivery methods
- the use of alternative learning technologies
- competencies required to complete subjects and modules successfully
- the development of enterprise skills
- participation in active assessment
- resources

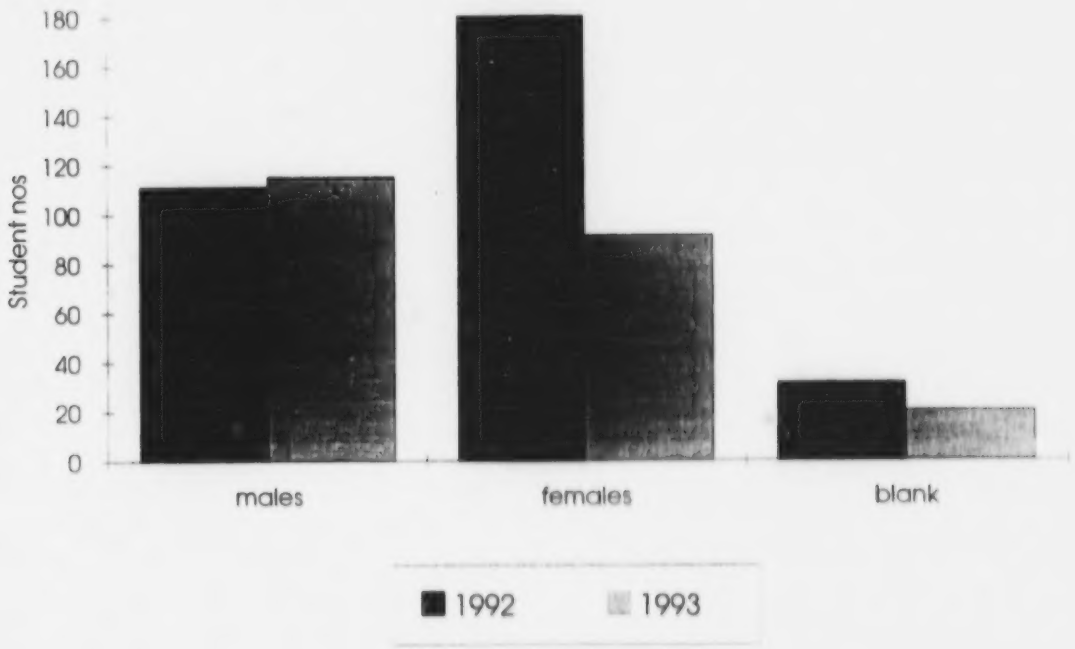
So how many 1992 students were there to tell us about their journey? We achieved a response rate of 32% with 322 students of the total 993 students responding. We discovered that 108 (34%) students were full-time and 200 (62%) part-time, (14 (4%) answers were left blank). Also 111 (35%) were males and 180 (56%) females (31 (8%) blank). With regards to age 90 (28%) students were under 20 years of age, 88 (27%) between 20 and 30, and over a third, 130 (40%) students, over 30 years of age (14 (6%) blank).

For student group 1993, we achieved a response rate of 37% with 226 students of the total of 681 responding. We discovered that 141 (62%) students were full-time and 82 (36%) part-time (3 answers (2%) were left blank). Also 115 (51%) were males and 91 (40%) females (20 (9%) blank). With regards to age, 88 students (39%) were under 20 years of age, 81(36%) were between 20 and 30, and less than a quarter, 51 (22%) students were over 30 years of age (6 (3%) blank).

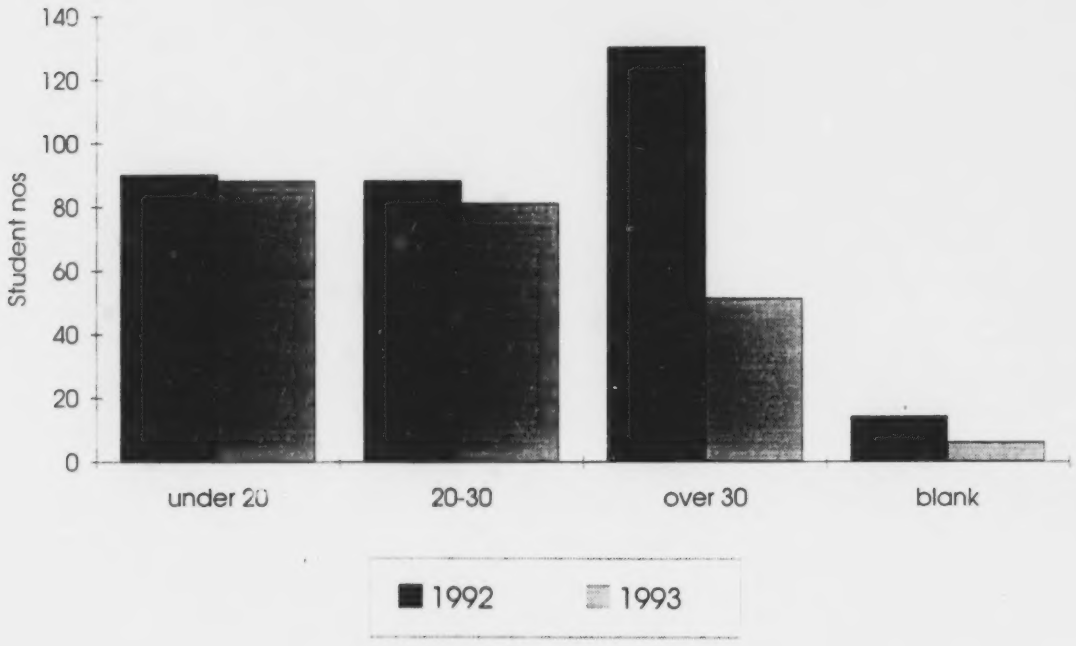
Initial student questionnaires 1992 and 1993
Study mode comparison



Initial student questionnaires 1992 and 1993
Gender comparison



Initial student questionnaires 1992 and 1993
Age comparison



It was interesting to note that based on the results of the initial student questionnaires during 1992 there was a greater proportion of responses from part-time students, in the over 30 year old age group and of the female gender. The responses received from students for the second year of operation shifted to a much greater proportion of students who were undertaking full-time studies, were less than 20 years old and of the male gender.

This shift in the profile of the campus in its second year of operation led to a number of issues which were not evident in the first year of operation. For example a comment from a more mature student casts some light onto the younger (less than 20 year old) age group.

> *The younger brigade don't cope because they come from an environment where they expect teachers to be around. Here they put the learning on you. At 16 or 17 that is hard.* (Student, 1993)

For a complete comparison of the results of the 1992 and 1993 initial questionnaires see Appendix L

Plainly, it was not just a matter of 'being' flexible. It is a process, whereby there is much to learn for all parties involved.

How did the staff fare?

Initial staff questionnaires

Using the initial staff interview responses as a basis, we then prepared a questionnaire (see Appendix M) and distributed it to all staff, including non-teaching staff as it became evident that the role of the non-teaching staff was very important and an integral part of the philosophy of learning at the campus. Regrettably, the non-teaching staff were unclear as to which particular questions were relevant to them as the majority of questions focussed on the facilitators and their level of satisfaction with flexible learning systems.

The findings supported the interview responses. Staff indicated a reasonable degree of satisfaction with such areas as the nature of interaction with students, success by the staff members in adapting to self-paced teaching approaches and resource-based learning. We also noted some teacher dissatisfaction with the lack of incorporation of enterprise skills into modules and with the lack of support for flexible delivery within the departmental (DETAFE) structures and systems (by both teaching and non-teaching staff).

For example:

> *Students' hours are assessed in an unrealistic manner with statistics based on traditional methods of delivery. And, more emphasis is required on systems to support open learning.* (Staff, 1992)

Regarding student issues, staff reflected that students need to be gradually introduced to self-pacing; that group formation needs to be encouraged more at the beginning of the course, and that better use could be made of lecturer assistants. It was also recommended that closer monitoring of student progress be made right from the commencement of the year or course, and that frequent student and staff forums be conducted at which concerns can be raised and actioned.

A common area of concern was the inadequacy of resources, including computer terminals. Yet, it would appear that this had been partially rectified in 1993 where improvements were noted by staff and students, in most, if not all program areas and the LACs. There was also concern for the need to rewrite learning guides to be simpler, clearer and more appropriate to the clientele.

Numerous surveyed staff had no trouble adjusting to the Tea Tree Gully Campus learning environment. As put by one facilitator:

> *I must have been philosophically and temperamentally pre-adapted! The Education Department (SA) teaching gave me scope for some innovation which I used in this direction.* (Staff, 1993)

Areas of adjustment the staff had to make

The areas included:

- being resource-based but without always having the desired resources to actually provide to the students;
- feelings of not being in control or competent enough to answer all questions;
- letting go of being the 'fountain of knowledge';
- assisting students to access information and learn rather than lecture or teach;
- a need for more emphasis on individual support. For example, having to go over some things more than once because students are not ready at the same time—perceived as inefficient;
- having to have knowledge about all the modules.

Time (or indeed the lack of it) was a common concern such as time to do recognition of prior learning (RPL), time to provide the support that is required, time involved in writing materials and in assessment. Others considered that expectations have been too high and that students and staff need to be 'eased' into the new system with considerable guidance and assistance to be maintained further into the course: *only then can we back away and allow self-paced learning to take over.* (Staff, 1992)

The staff adjustment to flexible learning is generally positive and can be summarised as follows:

> *I am extremely pleased to be involved in Tea Tree Gully (Campus) and although we all have our teething problems I believe I am in the best college for the future with regard to learning styles and learning outcomes and I believe we have the best opportunity to develop skills for the future.* (Staff, 1992)

> *The college as a whole is struggling with the new methodologies. I believe that the goodwill of staff, as well as the talent of the staff here, will overcome the difficulties.*
> (Staff, 1992)

5 'Approaching the Merry Olde Land of Oz' or now that we're getting there, what next?

Shifting problems and implementation challenges of flexible delivery

We have seen that students and staff alike set off on a journey that required travellers to show courage, use their brains, and to take heart that they were on the right track. Yet what were the specific implementation problems of flexible delivery? Let us look at shifts in perceptions that occurred en-route. The perceptions of the students and staff in the follow-up interviews and questionnaires may be of use in offering some answers.

Student follow-up interviews and follow-up questionnaires

Follow-up interviews and questionnaires were conducted for both student group 1992 and student group 1993 several months after the initial interviews and questionnaires. Only those students originally interviewed were invited to take part in the follow-up and in both years about 10% attended follow-up interviews (see Appendix N for student follow-up interview questions). However the response rate was better with the follow-up questionnaires—over 30% in both years (see Appendix P for the student follow-up questionnaire). The majority of the students were still studying at TTG while the others were either working or looking for work or studying elsewhere.

In comparing the initial questionnaires with the follow-up questionnaires there was a definite shift in perception by both student group 1992 and student group 1993 whereby they considered that the flexibility of their learning environment was increasing since they were originally surveyed (see Appendix I).

We also found that these students considered that initial concerns were being overcome. For example, with regards to AUSTUDY eligibility:

AUSTUDY is starting to understand the system now but there were huge problems initially. (Student, 1992)

A positive response to the learning environment was noted in the following comments:

I have a part-time job and family commitments which restricts my time. Doing this course on a self-paced study style, has enabled me to set a realistic goal and hopefully reaching it (sic). Full on lectures and tutorials would not suit my lifestyle. (Student, 1992)

By studying at Tea Tree Gully it's helped me gain the confidence to go into business. I'm now a manager/director of a service station. (Student, 1992)

Yet, there were still personal trials for students along the journey. One student was frustrated with the learning environment because she had chosen to attend TTG to get personal one-to-one assistance in learning a word processing package and found this was not the case: 'You have to find everything out for yourself'. In other words, she felt she could have used this approach at TTG by learning at home and not paying fees for the course. Again: 'It is a lovely campus but I wasted an awful lot of time trying to find out things'.

These students still considered that more structured tutorial and introductory lecture sessions would be highly desirable and that facilitators were friendly and generally helpful but too few in number. Concerns about group work were reiterated, with the advantage of being exposed to other people's experiences and views being partly overshadowed by the disadvantages of time wasting and difficulty of getting people together, especially part-time students.

No generalisations could be made about the quality and availability of learning materials and resources which appeared to differ between program areas. There was support for changes to the orientation sessions whereby the needs of the students need to be better ascertained and orientation sessions structured around these needs. On the topic of 'choice' the students concluded that they should be given the option of self-paced learning or more structured learning or a combination of both.

As with the staff, one of the student's interviewed (20–30 age group) who was enjoying the learning environment was nevertheless concerned about the 'younger brigade'.

They come from an environment where they expect teachers to be around and Tea Tree Gully puts the learning on you which at 16 or 17 is hard. (Student, 1993)

Staff follow-up interviews: Commenting on the journey

We provided the staff whom we interviewed in November of 1992 at the outset of the journey with a summary of the earlier staff questionnaire and interview responses and then invited them to attend a follow-up interview (September 1993). This interview aimed to note any shifts in earlier perceptions of the effectiveness of the learning methods and practices used at TTG, for example, such as student centredness, acquisition of enterprise skills, and learning resources. There were separate questions for teaching and non-teaching staff, and we invited all staff to comment on any area of the summary of responses and any other changes in their views not already covered. In addition, we asked staff about their program area performance indicators and material development. The responses to this follow-up interview were useful in formulating the follow-up questionnaire that we mention later in this section (see Appendix Q for a copy of the follow-up staff interview questions).

For the record, we interviewed a total of 15 staff in the follow-up. The original number of staff interviewed was 22 with 7 staff leaving the college prior to the follow-up interviews. Also, 8 were teaching staff and 7 non-teaching staff.

Shifts in perception: The teaching staff

Still a need for direction

The teaching staff observed a shift in student age in the second year of operation at TTG, with more under 20 year olds commencing study. The teaching staff consider that the continuing students are very self-directed and have learned to 'operate the system,' whereas the commencing students require study skills, more one-to-one counselling and intervention, with a need for structured tutorials. Indeed, staff need to provide options for students to come in and discuss particular topics. This is not happening. Students have to organise themselves into groups and those who have trouble forming groups appear to miss out on discussions. Yet on the topic of correlation between age and success with the flexible learning environment, the research team found it was not possible to generalise and as put by one interviewee: *The reason for being here, that is, the motivation, affects how successful the students will adapt to open learning.*

Access to resources

The staff were very conscious of the findings of the research team in 1992, especially in regard to access to resources and the amounts available for students, and the staff have tried to improve the situation. The learning resources generally appear to be increasing in number and quality with a constant review and upgrade of existing materials in the form of tapes and videos. The staff are also aware that there is a fine line between adequate access and

'spoon feeding' and in some instances question whether students are being given the opportunity to develop the necessary skills, for instance, how to access information.

Shifts in perception: The non-teaching staff

The non-teaching staff interviewed generally considered that flexible learning systems were working well and continuing to improve. These staff are satisfied with their working environment and appreciate increases in staff to deal with demands and to allow job diversity. Nevertheless, the now completed amalgamation with Gilles Plains College of TAFE was perceived as a threat to both their continued employment and the use of flexible delivery methodologies.

We noted at TTG that there continues to be a good working relationship between teaching and non-teaching staff with increased co-operation in some activities such as orientation and development of key competencies. Yet, due to insufficient time, there is not a great deal of interaction and liaison across program areas apart from forums and college review days—though the interaction at these occasions appeared to be vigorous. Indeed, these staff perceive that other institutions are overcoming cynicism and showing interest in adopting some of the flexible learning methodologies being employed at TTG. This view is held due to the fact that many of the staff are on both state and national curriculum panels; the standard of the materials produced at TTG Campus is very high; and the campus has developed a good philosophy of sharing. Yet, the non-teaching staff see a need still for more supporting interactive video production, and for problems to be overcome with the computer-based Student Management and Record Tracking (SMART) system and for more workshops to introduce beginning students to computers.

One program area has many problems with students accessing the SMART system. In particular:

- students are not familiar with the steps required to log-on to the system;
- there are not many students who are computer literate when they start the course;
- there exists a high level of computer anxiety;
- there is a great need for more workshops to introduce students to using the computer.

Staff concerns

The research team asked all staff (be they teaching or non-teaching) to comment on their concerns. Some of these comments are listed below.

- There is still a high proportion of part-time staff and also a high turnover of staff which can be unsettling if not disruptive.

- Some facilitators feel a loss of professional independence; they are required to work as a team and this does not always suit.

- There has been a perceived loss of rapport usually noticed with the traditional student and teacher relationship. Now the facilitator is ranked among one of the variety of media available to use, liaise, and interact with during the learning process.

- Still to be addressed at the campus at the time of this report is the industrial issue of lecturers and lecturer assistants which includes the management of the learning environment being left to lecturer assistants as lecturing staff are busy with curriculum matters. A compounding issue is that managing the learning environment is very difficult with a high proportion of part-time staff.

- Liaison (faculty) officers need a common name across campus. They play a critical but hard to maintain role due to other demands on their time and a high proportion of part-time students who may need to be contacted outside of TTG.

- Assessment issues—there is a perceived need to reduce marking but still maintain high standards. Some areas include verbal assessment that is working well but raises other issues regarding standards.

- Facilitator 'generic versus specialisation' was being intensely debated at the time of this research report.

Perceptions of performance indicators

As referred to later within this section of the report (see point 6 of the staff summary responses as well as 'Managing the Land of Oz') a new management structure was implemented at TTG in 1993. Performance agreements were drawn up incorporating performance indicators negotiated within each 'team'. TTG is relatively high performance orientated, with the institution as a whole having both quantitative and qualitative indicators in place. At the time of the interviews staff were actively involved in establishing their team's performance indicators and it was considered relevant to the researchers to question them on this process. They were asked to give examples of the types of performance indicators used in their area; the process undertaken to establish these indicators; and the envisaged changes with the process and/or types of indicators within the next two or three years.

The majority of interviewees—both teaching and non-teaching—related better to the process of establishing performance indicators than identifying examples used in their area. The consensus was

that the process required a huge effort and much time with different processes being used in different areas. Indeed, at the time of interviewing (October 1993) there was a wide discrepancy between the different program areas in their stage of development of the performance agreement for 1994. The research team also noted that there was an anomaly in time between performance agreements (January–December) and budgets (July–June) which can affect the implementation of plans. (In practice the budgets for teams are not confirmed until September–October.)

Perceptions of material development

The majority of staff interviewed had been involved in material development and there was increased opportunity for staff development in flexible learning systems at Tea Tree Gully Campus. Further, most staff interviewed had a sound background and extensive experience in flexible delivery and adult learning. We discovered that some staff considered that most students are pleased with the learner materials. Yet, this mode of learning does put a greater load on students, that is, they have to master most of the work and also work through all topics. Other staff members believe that the students sometimes may find the material too vague, ambiguous, and even inaccurate. It was also considered that students find the learning guides expensive—especially as they also pay a materials fee.

Staff are also aware of the time required to develop material, of the need to review material regularly, and to produce videos, software packages, and so on. Moreover, part-time staff have the problem of not being able to create materials on time and there is generally not enough time to undertake research for material development. As a result, staff are often frustrated with the lack of lead up time to develop materials—and this frustration has been compounded by the array of new awards on the horizon. Staff also perceived fears in regard to the measurement of quantity, that is, the campus is producing quality but in too little quantity at this time. So, although TTG does well in meeting the individual student needs, it may have to modify its offerings with national award restructuring and amalgamation. Only time will tell where the journey will lead.

The planning process in material development

The research team also noted that better planning could have been used by writers in one program area. Where there were numerous writers there needed to be group involvement and more consistency of approach. Unfortunately, the 'ideal' of piloting programs has not been realisable due to lack of lead time. One program area has realised the need to make assessment much clearer and is moving towards a competency-based one. This area also has recognised the need for marking guide development that

requires a great deal of time, which has not been budgetted. There also remains a need to build instructions into the materials to allow students to check sections with facilitators before moving on, and to build in formative assessment sections to enable students to do self-checks or use computer-based checking. Finally, several interviewees felt that some facilitators expect too much of students in introductory units and that the content needs to be cut back, and that the introductory units could use more consistent and specific directions.

Staff follow-up questionnaires: Further comments on the journey

The research team prepared the questionnaire for both teaching and non-teaching staff, both full and part-time. We invited staff to make comment on any of the questions of interest to them that had been formulated as a result of the staff follow-up interview responses (see Appendix R for the staff follow-up questionnaire). A summary of these responses follows for the total of 34 responses we received.

1 **How have industrial issues, for example, the roles of lecturers and lecturer assistants, or part-time staff, affected the TTG Campus operation?**

The campus as of the beginning of 1993 (in its second year of operation) adopted a flat management structure with self-managing teams within each program area. At the interviews several staff indicated some concerns with this structure, especially in regard to industrial issues, for instance, the roles of lecturers and lecturer assistants within this new structure. The majority of staff later surveyed commented on this issue with most of them considering that there were problems yet to be overcome. Intense discussions (and in some cases resultant program team fragmentation) continue on issues such as: the clearer definition of professional roles; the 'abuse' of lecturer assistants; and equity and responsibilities. We learned that members of one program team and students see no difference between lecturers and lecturer assistants. Whereby another member of staff commented:

> *The division of lecturer and lecturer assistant is artificial and does not allow enough flexibility which is counterproductive in a high skill area in its developmental phases. All the skills of lecturer assistants cannot be used effectively without exploitation due to the differences in leave/pay etc.* (Staff, 1993)

Another concern is that teaching staff are expected to take on management roles for which they are not trained which is causing concern to those lecturers who want to teach and don't have time

for management roles. Yet others are affected by the lack of line management support as a result of the flatter management structure.

2 **Can you comment about the recent focus by TTG Campus on integration of key competencies into learning guides? If yes, please elaborate.**

TTG has recently focussed on the integration of key competencies into learning guides including the setting up of a 'focus group' with students receiving the opportunity of displaying these competencies. The focus group is college-wide with a representative from each program area. It was formed by TTG to develop employer and college statements that simplify the Mayer Key Competencies and develop a credential that students can take with them. Workshops have been set up for staff on how to integrate key competencies into the learning guides. In particular, the workshops focus on how to facilitate, assess and report on the key competencies.

> *In the absence of national guidelines we at TTG simply have to go it alone. This is pioneering work.* (Michael Sachsse, Director, Torrens Valley Institute of Vocational Education, June 1994)

Time will tell as to the success or otherwise of this integration—as one staff member says 'All staff are still grappling with this'. Concerns include: lack of clear guidelines, lack of stability of some key competencies (that is, changed or combined); lack of time to develop; lack of resources; lack of staff training and a need for further work on assessing and credentialing them. One staff member aptly commented:

> *I believe it is very important that we all (students included) become skilled in the key competencies. To do this opportunities need to exist for staff and students to learn the skills and processes necessary for demonstration of the key competencies; we need to provide materials, seminars, packages etc. to facilitate this.* (Staff, 1993)

Indeed, the report prepared by the focus group has illustrated a concerted effort to deal with the above concerns of staff.

3 **Do you consider that there is a place for structured tutorial and/or other 'traditional' methods of learning within the TTG Campus? Please elaborate.**

There was overwhelming feedback by students that they would like to see more introductory lectures and/or tutorials within the flexible learning environment. Many surveyed staff emphatically agreed with them with a large consensus to opt for a 'mix' of both open and more traditional teaching in certain circumstances, as well

as for giving students the opportunity to choose between the options as it suits them. In fact, staff see a more structured approach as appropriate to flexible delivery methodologies and program specific needs:

- at the beginning of courses
- in advanced technical modules
- at orientation stages
- during the introduction of a new subject area
- in passing on procedural information to students
- in motivating students (such as a keynote speaker at a conference)
- and for students who may prefer to learn by listening rather than by reading or for some non-English-background students

One program area within the nine vocational program areas intends to become more structured after finding that many students in the past have been 'floundering' and producing poor quality work. The staff within this program area consider that this was largely due to students being left to their own devices too much and with often the only contact with staff at times of assessment:

> *Tutorials would ensure they are on the right track, assist them in moving through the modules more efficiently, allow checking on attitudes and values.* (Staff, 1993)

4 **What are your reactions to the statement that the flexible learning systems being used at TTG Campus present an alternative to the recessionary job market.**

The research team surveyed staff as to their reactions to a statement made by an interviewee that the flexible learning systems being used at Tea Tree Gully Campus present an alternative to the recessionary job market. The statement was made during an interview in relation to student acquisition of enterprise skills whereby it was considered that students are becoming quite adept at organising their time. There was the perception that this has resulted in some students adopting the attitude 'because I study when I'm ready I'll look for a job when I'm ready' with students returning to study more courses rather than actively looking for a job. The innovative learning environment at the campus does allow students to extend their study time more than the traditional system and some students see it as a 'shelter from the storm'. Accordingly, it becomes an ethical issue as to whether this 'waiting game' be simply considered a legal right or whether it may also prevent others from enrolling in an institute of TAFE.

Nevertheless, the question to staff within the follow-up questionnaire met with a mixed response. Many staff (perhaps due largely to a lack of the above information) were unclear of what the question meant and responded no further. Others could not see the correlation between flexible delivery over other educational systems

and lack of jobs in the recession: 'Any post secondary education has the potential for this—why single out flexible learning systems at Tea Tree Gully in particular?' Or simply: 'If this is the case it is a reflection of government policy. Emphasising a need for training as opposed to a need for job creation'.

5 **Do you see any correlation between the reason for learners choosing TTG and their motivation towards open learning?**

The student surveys over the two year period have revealed that the large majority of students choose TTG because of proximity to home and/or work and to a lesser extent due to the course offerings. Few of those surveyed indicated that they chose TTG due to the open learning environment. As a result of this finding we, the researchers, were interested in ascertaining whether the staff considered there was any correlation between the reason for learners choosing TTG Campus and their motivation towards open learning.

Indeed, many of the staff agreed that the students' reasons for selecting TTG were unrelated to motivation towards open learning and that location was the deciding factor. Further, it was considered that many students who knew TTG to be an innovative training organisation did not really know what this would mean for their studies. Yet, as Tea Tree Gully Campus becomes more widely publicised for its innovative learning environment we may expect that the above trend will lessen and thus allow a more comprehensive comparative study to be undertaken into choice of college and motivation.

6 **Please comment on the self-managing teams and the flat management structure recently implemented at TTG Campus.**

A flat management structure with self-managing program teams was implemented after one year of operation of TTG at its present site. This innovative approach to management offers to complement the flexible approach to student learning. Each program area has entered into performance agreements with management with evaluation held at least twice a year. This organisational infrastructure reflects TTG's commitment to a consultative and participative approach to decision making with recognition and utilisation of the diversity of knowledge, experience, and skills of the staff and greater college community.

After several months of implementation, the staff were invited to comment on the self-managing (autonomous) teams and flat management structure. Management were anticipating a mixed reaction to the change and this was borne out by the responses within the staff questionnaires. There was a huge response though quite mixed—some respondees were quietly confident that once the teaching problems were over it would certainly be beneficial. Others, however, considered more staff training and development is required before it would be successful. Many have 'complained' of

the amount of time it has taken to set up and the extra workloads it has created. Yet others were very negative and scathing in their responses with even some believing that the management structure had not flattened at all.

The evaluation has highlighted concerns of the staff and we consider it to be appropriate for a further evaluation of the management structure at the Tea Tree Gully Campus, especially in the light of the recent amalgamation with Gilles Plains which uses a more hierarchal organisational structure. Indeed as one staff member aptly noted:

> *There are problems which are not receiving adequate attention. The approach is premised on the assumption that it is applicable to our educational environment—research has not been conducted to support this.* (Staff, 1993)

A question of interest—gender

The research team invited staff to comment on whether gender was a factor in learner success with flexible learning systems at the campus. This was an area that had not been addressed in the initial staff questionnaire but was considered worthy of mention. Our question was:

7 **In your opinion is *gender* a factor in learner success within flexible learning systems at TTG Campus?**

We found that the majority of responses were either negative or uncertain. These results may have been partly due to the fact that certain program areas are almost exclusively one gender or the other and no comparisons were available for staff. What was indicated (and supported by the other studies into gender and learning) was that women appreciate the opportunity to work in groups which is a major component of the flexible learning delivery at Tea Tree Gully Campus. This indication is supported by the comment from a facilitator within a male-dominated program area:

> *In our program quite a number of female students have dropped out. I believe there is no 'critical mass' and they have no support network around them.* (Staff, 1993)

However, a more extensive study of the individual program areas and causes for attrition would be required before any specific conclusions could be drawn.

A brief consideration of age as a learning success factor

The response to whether age was an issue in the learner success or otherwise met with more definite responses than that of gender. Our question was:

8 **Similarly do you consider that age (under 20, 20–30, over 30) is an issue in the learner success or otherwise of flexible learning systems at TTG Campus? Please elaborate.**

Some staff considered that age is not strongly related to success, but that life experiences and learning styles affect the learner's success in adapting readily to new methodologies. However, the majority were of the definite view that the 'younger' students do not adapt as readily as the 'older' students and require much more support and structure (including such areas as time management, motivation and decision making). As one staff commented:

> *Under twenties have less motivation, bow more to peer pressure, have not matured into independent learners so they benefit very little from flexible delivery.* (Staff, 1993)

And another pertinent observation:

> *We have many success stories, particularly with the mature age part-time students many of whom have almost halved the time it would take them in a traditional system. It is the young and isolated we need to cater for.* (Staff, 1993)

These findings would appear to support the need for increased student support in the form of orientation, counselling and tutorial support, especially for the younger students.

9 **What is your reaction to the following statement used in reference to the learner at TTG Campus: 'TTG is user-friendly but user-abused.'**

We invited staff to comment on the above statement, namely the campus was user-friendly yet also user-abused. This somewhat controversial and sensitive statement arose from a staff interview where the staff member considered that the learning environment at Tea Tree Gully was effective and learner-centred (that is 'friendly') but that certain students were taking unfair advantage of this climate. For instance, abusing the system of self-paced learning by logging-in and then disappearing for the remainder of the day.

Yet several questionnaire responses considered this question vague—they understood the first part of the statement, but not what was meant by 'user-abused.' Others appeared to interpret it

but still believed there was no evidence of this abuse at all, while some others agreed with the statement. Staff often saw it as a two-pronged statement and several responded favourably to Tea Tree Gully as being 'user-friendly' (though two or three did respond very negatively) while others saw the emphasis of the statement placed on the 'user-abused' part. It was often difficult to know what part of the statement they were responding to—some 'picked up' on the 'user-friendly', others on the 'user-abused' aspect. There were enough responses received to form a clear picture showing there is some abuse but it appears to be not significant and probably no more than any other similar institution. Systems such as SMART will help to reduce any incidence of abuse. Indeed, it does appear to be an area of undue concern for the Tea Tree Gully Campus.

10 **Can you comment about facilitators having generic versus specialist skills in regard to subject offerings? If yes, please elaborate.**

We invited staff to give their views on the above issue as it had been ascertained through staff interviews that it was a 'hotly debated topic' around the campus and feedback from a wider population was considered valuable. For example, should program areas concentrate on developing staff expertise in specific areas or is a more encompassing breadth of knowledge required (such as 'wine culture' versus 'liquor' within Hospitality or 'filing' versus 'office procedures' within Business)?

We found that the majority of responses indicated that both generic and specialist skills are required. One facilitator states: 'As a facilitator at Tea Tree Gully you have to know everything about everything all the time.' Indeed, generic skills were held to be especially relevant in introductory subjects with specialist expertise required in more advanced as well as practical components of the course. One facilitator is concerned that specialist skills become 'diluted quite rapidly in this self-paced student learning environment' and argues that a 'traditional' lecturer' maintains his (sic) level of expertise much more readily as he (sic) is regurgitating the specialist information.' Another respondent believes that facilitators need to be multi-skilled and that 'specialist knowledge and skills can create division and isolation.' Another considers that first and foremost facilitators need to have generic and facilitator skills with specialist skills and knowledge embedded in the resources. Accordingly, facilitators need to be able to assist in accessing and deciphering where necessary.

Plainly, the issue of generic versus specialist skills in regard to subject offerings remains a contested issue with the resolution still pending.

11 Can you comment on the formation of the Torrens Valley Institute of TAFE with regard to a) educational implications, b) management implications?

Educational implications

With the recent formation of the Torrens Valley Institute of TAFE (amalgamation of Tea Tree Gully Campus with Gilles Plains and Brookway Park Campuses), staffs were asked to comment on the educational implications of this merger—especially as Gilles Plains and Brookway Park Campuses was perceived in the main as 'traditional' teaching campuses and had not adopted the flexible learning environment of Tea Tree Gully Campus at an institution-wide level. It needs to be noted that both Gilles Plains and Brookway Park had pockets of flexible delivery.

The research team noted through informal feedback from TTG staff that many considered this amalgamation to be untimely as they were still grappling with the flexible learning methodologies and self-managing teams, and were not 'ready' for yet another change:

> *We needed time to stabilise and get things working right. All these changes are just making our job harder.* (Staff, 1993)

Nevertheless, several respondents see the amalgamation as advantageous in that offerings would be broadened as well as the quality of the offerings and choice of learning methodologies. They envisage an increase in 'cross-fertilisation of educational ideas'. Others were concerned that they had chosen Tea Tree Gully because of its student-centred flexible delivery environment and may now find themselves in an increasingly conventional environment that they had chosen to leave. Still others consider it a great challenge and an opportunity to introduce student-centred learning methodologies. Another respondent views the amalgamation as an opportunity to address the issue of competency-based education and would like to see a system that is both competency-based and rewards excellence. The question was also raised by another respondent who believes there will be difficulties associated with the integration of different teaching and learning cultures at Tea Tree Gully and Gilles Plains:

> *Should it even be aimed for? Should the different cultures be left as they are to cater for student learning preferences? Or should both become open learning environments as current research on adult education indicates is preferable?* (Staff, 1993)

Management implications

We also invited staff to comment on the management implications of the merger and the majority voiced concerns on this issue. There were concerns that Gilles Plains will not happily adopt the Tea Tree Gully style of management and that difficulties may arise as a result. There are also concerns that response times will lengthen,

frustration will develop, and that it will be more difficult to make decisions by 'consensus'. Respondents believe that what will be required is open communication and a great deal of staff development opportunities such as work shadowing, open discussions and joint staff meetings. Respondents also see difficulties associated with a manager from Gilles Plains managing a Tea Tree Gully program area and vice versa, whereby staff at each campus are likely to want to keep their 'status quo' with regard to teaching methods and so on. It is to be noted that the offer of targetted separation packages (TSP) has helped to shed those managers who were too inflexible to change. Others see increased workloads for managers across institute programs with additional support required. They also foresee greater difficulty in developing self-managing teams and greater complexity in management issues. Yet, one senior management person at Tea Tree Gully Campus is confident of the outcome:

> *Having worked with most Gilles Plains managers for a few months now I am optimistic that the vision we had at Tea Tree Gully will not be seriously compromised.* (Staff, 1993)

Gilles Plains campus provides the opportunity to demonstrate how a traditional education facility (which most TAFE colleges are) can make the paradigm shift to learner-centred methodologies and to the new management style.

The researchers consider that this whole area of amalgamation of campuses with different teaching and learning methodologies will warrant further study.

Likert Scale questions

Six Likert Scale questions ranging in value from one to five (one indicating the least degree of flexibility and five indicating the highest degree of flexibility) were incorporated into the staff follow-up questionnaire. The lowest score was achieved on the question *To what extent do departmental structures/systems assist or support the flexible delivery environment?* This question indicated that departmental structures/systems gave a low level of assistance or support to the open learning environment. It should be noted that this question was directed at the state level departmental structures and systems (TAFE). The SMACIS system (Student Monitoring and Course Information System) being used at TTG Campus (as a testing site) was modelled on the data required for a traditional TAFE college.

The answers to the other questions indicated that there was a very good level of satisfaction among the facilitators and managers with the learning environment at TTG Campus and good Likert ratings were given for success of the implementation of flexible learning systems during the last year; success of flexible learning systems

with program areas; the level of enterprise skills that the graduating students take into the workplace, and the extent of incorporation of enterprise skills into the modules with the program areas.

Managing the Land of OZ

As reported by McNamara (1992) TAFE, Australia wide, has numbers far in excess of any other sector engaged in forms of open learning activity—in fact more than double. TTG, in particular, has adopted methodologies that are student centred as opposed to teacher centred in an effort to produce graduates with employable skills and a range of enterprise skills (or key competencies) which will enable them to adapt to change. The participants' decision making, which is encouraged in the student centred approach, is reflected in the management style.

Clearly, there is an educational and productivity rationale for adopting this management style (see Appendix C for details of this rationale). For example, within the context of industry and economics there has been recent restructuring and the need for more training to improve productivity and to also incorporate social justice issues. The learner-centred focus of open learning methods can bring benefits to all students and can assist institutions to adjust to the needs of a more diverse student population. Disadvantaged groups, or under-represented groups of people in the education sector, such as people who are long-term unemployed, people who have a disability or are undergoing rehabilitation from an accident are commonly called designated groups at TTG Campus.

We are able to share with you their thoughts. From a student with a disability:

> *This is my first experience with open learning and I've learned a lot, not just academically. I hope one day to be able to use it . . . and for me it has been a good experience.*
> (Student, 1993)

From a student undergoing rehabilitation after an accident who gave a very positive response to the benefits of having a 'flexible' learning environment:

> *My personal situation is, if I can't make it due to medical reasons, the system allows me an extension of time, to enable me to continue the course. The opportunity to pay again has a lot of advantages.*
> (Student, 1992)

From a student who had been unemployed for a long time:

> *I must admit that the adaptation from long-term unemployment, to studies was somewhat of a daunting experience! But a grateful one.* (Student, 1993)

Flexible delivery has the ability to respond to individual needs, and can address the rigidities of more traditional educational systems. Open learning methods foster autonomy and independence and in this way empower the learner. This is important both in developing the capacity for life-long learning and giving people a second chance at education.

The required student profile includes development of enterprise skills (key competencies) as well as industry-specific knowledge and skills. In these developments we have witnessed a new educational methodology with a move away from the lockstep, teacher-centred approach to a learner-centred approach in which students have a greater say over what, where, when and how they learn.

To complement the 'open' approach to student learning, the management structure of the campus was initially also relatively 'open' with self-management teams within a relatively 'flat' management structure. At the beginning of 1993, TTG took the radical step of altering its management style to an even flatter structure where each program area took the radical step of altering its management style to an even flatter structure where each program area became completely self-managed. Performance agreements, with each 'team' taking responsibility for their program area were being drawn up, with evaluation at least twice a year. Each area has its own administrative support. During 1992 senior lecturers were acting managers of program areas, with a small amount of contact teaching (20%). Award restructuring saw these staff become principal lecturers and as of 1993 TTG had no managers within the program areas. Instead, a team approach was adopted where goals, strategies, performance indicators and the budget were negotiated with each team. Each program area could decide who was to represent that program area at monthly network forums.

All encouraged to take part

All employees at all levels are encouraged to offer ideas that are supported as merited, where all help to shape the mission of the organisation and of the basic philosophy and values that the mission implies. Bureaucracy is avoided—at least highly reduced—by the establishment of decentralised divisions, each with major input into its own planning and control, including control over its budget.

The measure of productivity

The measure of productivity, whether it be in the sense of productivity by the self-managing work teams or an attempt to measure the educational outcomes of the learner, has the effect of putting the planning, control, and monitoring of the process in the hands of the learners or members of the autonomous work team. Performance agreements can empower the members of the work team but only if sufficient time is made available for each person to have input into the planning process for the next calendar year.

A brief historical look at performance agreements at TTG

Not all program areas were resourced sufficiently in late 1992 to prepare performance agreements for the following year.

Performance agreements were drawn up for all program areas for the 1993 calendar year. Tea Tree Gully Campus designated their performance indicators in five areas:

1 students
2 staff
3 educational support
4 physical resources
5 financial resources

The campus designated empirical data for all five areas as well as qualitative data for students and staff. For 1994 full performance agreements have been written up for each of the program areas (see Appendix S for examples of specific performance indicators).

The final section of this report presents the conclusions that we drew based on our understanding of the accounts given to us by those who made the journey.

6 Conclusions

To assist with predicting and planning for change and innovation in DETAFE and other post-secondary educational institutions, the report notes the following points:

Becoming aware of open and flexible learning

The primary reason for attending the Tea Tree Gully Campus was location rather than flexible delivery. Nevertheless, there clearly has been a greater acceptance of flexible delivery in the second year, that is, in student group 1993. This gradual increase in acceptance has been a result of a growing recognition on the part of students of the advantages of a more open and flexible system. It is foreseeable that this growing recognition—if significantly promoted—could eventually displace 'location' as the main reason for attending the TTG Campus.

Transition—a process of partnership between old and new

There is a need and a place for introductory lectures, workshops, and ongoing tutorials by staff and students within a flexible and open learning framework. The implementation of these activities requires differentiation according to the program area and the recommended progression therein.

Adapting to different ways of learning

Younger students, for instance, those who recently completed high school and are approximately under 20 years of age, need greater ongoing student support from both staff and fellow students. Among students of this age group, self-direction was generally problematic; younger students' perceptions of learning were based chiefly on conventional models and institutions of compulsory education. Induction at the Tea Tree Gully Campus, especially for younger students, could highlight the adaptation that may be required if students are to benefit from its innovative systems.

Group work—sharing strengths and weaknesses along the way

Group work has enjoyed some measure of success, though it has not always worked well. There have been problems with the cohesion of groups and with group dynamics, for example, expectations of 'who should lead' on the basis of age and experience, as well as differing multicultural perceptions of the merits of solitary work as opposed to group work. A flexible approach may well acknowledge these differing expectations and perceptions to accommodate such them in a system that allows for difference as a criterion for flexibility.

Empowering the educational community

There has been a clear and constructive focus on empowerment of the learner, teams, and management as members of an educational community. Yet, the term 'empowerment' needs to be clarified in terms of the particular context and support factors required for each of the above groups.

Through the dark forest

DETAFE departmental structures have often been inhibiting to TTG, particularly in its efforts to implement flexible learning systems. Again, these initial difficulties point to the process-like nature of the implementation in educational, support, and administrative areas.

Which way to go

Choice was not always evident, for example, in multiple entry/exit; recognition of prior learning; mandatory on-campus attendance (even though this was not part of TTGs original charter), assessment, etc. As a result, 'choice' needs to be defined within the given educational and administrative parameters.

Managing the land

When looking at the documents provided for the performance agreements of the past three years, that is, for the years 1992, 1993, and 1994, a progressive maturation process has been observed. Initially, there was an attempt to define performance indicators and with the year 1994 there exists a full performance agreement for each program area. The expectation that each program area will construct a performance agreement for the forthcoming years is consistent with the philosophy of the flatter management structure and the empowerment of the program teams.

Thus, the merger with Gilles Plains has meant that the staff of this campus, too, have been introduced into the culture of performance agreements. This practice is in keeping with the philosophy of 'self-managing workrooms'. The self-managing work team needs to plan, organise, and direct and monitor its own work activities and the educational outputs and the performance agreement provides the cornerstone for the planning and reviewing of this process.

Over the past two years, we in the research team have witnessed the growth and maturation in the annual exercise of writing performance agreements (see Appendix T for the general format of a performance agreement). The embryonic stage to the fully matured sophisticated document that exists for 1994. Indeed, it is expected that 1994 will be the year that heralds a degree of high satisfaction by everyone taking part in the Tea Tree Gully management process.

Growing stronger

There is a clear need for ongoing staff development. Staff need support and continuous opportunities for professional development in order to continue to be agents of change.

Future journeys

The research team finds that further research may well consider more closely factors of age, gender, and the motivation amongst students in relation to flexible delivery.

As for following the *Yellow Brick Road*, it is the learners realising their capacity to meet challenges and achieve their aims that is important. It is truly the journey that makes the difference. During this two year sojorn with the learning community of TTG Campus we have illuminated the issues and concerns of the students, staff and management of TTG Campus . . . the Dorothy's, the Scarecrows, the Tinmen and the Lions—with Toto the dog pointing the way to a better journey in search of the Wizard of Oz.

An apt comment from the list server ICPT_L on the Internet states:

> *Excellence in education does not involve simply the successful completion of a marked-out journey from one point to another. It is more an exploration, an adventure, often into points not on the map.* (ICPT_L listserver)

The last word comes from a comment given by a 1993 student in the follow-up questionnaire:

> *As in real life, the things you need most are the things you have least; being a pioneer or pilot experiment going to some place, the road is not mapped out and the ride is not 'smooth'; and sometimes you come to dead ends!*
> (Student, 1993)

The truly self-directed autonomous learner will overcome these 'dead ends' and continue their journey along the lifelong path of learning.

Annotated bibliography

The following was compiled as background reading for the researchers.

ACTU/TDC Mission to Western Europe 1987, *Australia reconstructed: ACTU/TDC Mission to Western Europe : A report by the mission members to the ACTU and the TDC*, AGPS, Canberra.
Outlines strategies to maintain Australia's international competitiveness, reduce our balance of payments constraint and enhance our national productivity. Of particular interest in the Tea Tree Gully context are pages 118–120 & 124–126 which stress the need for:

- greater participation of workers in entry-level training and retraining;
- Australians to develop a higher technological awareness and better skills in using current technology;
- courses and training to be offered in flexible ways;
- vocational education and training to be broad-based and responsive to the needs of both young people and the economy.

Architectural brief [for] Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE 1988, Department of TAFE, Adelaide.
Outlines the design requirements, general specifications and building brief details for the planned college and joint-use library. Apart from its concentration on technical information this report provides one and a half pages of information about the educational style of the new college. (Some of this information duplicates that provided in *Concept proposal [for] Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE* 1985.)

Ashurst, J, 1987, 'Open learning: An explanation of the term and its relevance to TAFE', *Victorian TAFE Papers*, no 6, pp.15–19.
Defines open learning and describes its features, clearly distinguishing it from telematics and distance education. Outlines the support mechanisms required for open learning systems to be effective, and cautions against the use of open learning solely because it has the potential to reduce costs. Discusses why the use of an open learning approach is important within the Australian TAFE sector. (At the time of writing the author was the Policy Projects Officer with VTOCN.)

Australian Science and Technology Council, 1987, *Wealth from skills: Measures to raise the skills of the workforce*: A report to the Prime Minister by the Australian Science and Technology Council (ASTEC) prepared by the Technological Change Committee, AGPS, Canberra.

In response to the perceived need to raise the skill levels of the Australian workforce, this report recommends changes to entry-level training and TAFE. In particular it advocates the use of

competency testing rather than time served as a criterion for completion of entry-level training, the use of non-traditional modes of teaching (open learning both on-campus and off-campus) to increase the flexibility and efficiency of education and training, better staff development within TAFE, and the recognition of learning and experience gained in a range of contexts. The need for greater liaison between TAFE and industry is stressed, as is the need to increase overall participation in education and training, and to increase the level of private investment in skill formation.

Ayles, C, 1986, *Individualised competency-based education: The economics of the system*, unpublished paper, 30 July 1986.
Examines the costs associated with developing and producing learning materials for a system based on individualised competency-based education. Although costs are higher than those associated with offering traditional face-to-face teaching/learning, the author presents evidence that the running costs per student hour are likely to be lower than for traditional classroom-based teaching. Names several vocational education institutions in the USA and Australia which have found individualised computer-based (bibliographer's note : the words are computer-based, not competency-based as in the paper's title) education to be more cost-effective than a traditional mode of education. Includes a short bibliography.

Ayles, C, 1988, *Individualised learning: Productivity gains*, unpublished letter, 11 January 1988.
Summarises the information about the cost-effectiveness of individualised computer-based education which was presented for several vocational education institutions in Ayles 1986. Provides some actual data for the case studies cited in that paper.

Ayles, C, 1989, 'Learning methodologies at Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE', *Open Learning Newsletter*, no 2, pp.9 & 12.
The author reports that Tea Tree Gully College staff and management and other DETAFE personnel have decided that the new college will practice a combination of student-centred learning, competency-based education and resource-based learning, integrated with enterprise skills. These terms are defined, and the rationale behind the decision to offer each of them in combination with the others is discussed. Although a comprehensive bibliography is lacking, this is a key paper in that it clearly and logically sets out the background for the learning methodologies to be employed at the college.

Bagnall, D, 1992, 'A wallflower in bloom', *The Bulletin*, vol 114, no 5818, pp.37–39.
The Finn and Carmichael reports have precipitated huge changes in TAFE, bringing TAFE courses more into line with industry needs and aiming to increase the skill level of those in entry-level training courses or already in the workforce. Competency-based training, recognition of prior learning, and credit transfer are all contributing to the changing face of TAFE, as are the introduction of new

technologies and new learning methodologies such as open and flexible learning. The main thrust of the article is the need for TAFE to become more flexible and customer-focussed, and to be increasingly entrepreneurial in marketing its services and courses to industry.

Christian-Carter, J, 1990, 'Open learning: Is it worth it?' in *Open learning: Moving into the mainstream*, papers prepared for the National Extension College/CRAC Conference 27–28 June 1990 Robinson College, University of Cambridge, National Extension College, Cambridge, UK.
Asserts the need to measure the cost-effectiveness of open learning in monetary terms. Poses the questions that need to be asked in order to evaluate the overall impact of open learning and suggests the types of data that can be used to answer them.

Concept proposal [for] Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE, 1985, Department of TAFE, Adelaide.
Proposes the establishment of a generalist college to service the educational needs of its immediate catchment area and to complement the more specialised courses offered to the wider community by the nearby Gilles Plains College of TAFE. Lists the educational programs to be offered at Tea Tree Gully and outlines the alternative teaching/learning methodologies to be used at the college which is to be a pilot centre for developing these methodologies. Includes a site analysis and two development options.

Farren, R, 1985, *The need for new methodologies in education and training*, Technical Extension Service, Perth.
Despite a perceived teacher resistance to their introduction, the author advocates the use of new student-centred methodologies (e.g. open learning and the use of educational technology) to improve the cost-effectiveness and educational effectiveness of education and training within the Australian TAFE sector.

Fitzgerald, M, 1990, 'Open learning and VET' in *Open learning: Moving into the mainstream*, papers prepared for the National Extension College/CRAC Conference 27–28 June 1990 Robinson College, University of Cambridge, National Extension College, Cambridge, UK.
Raises a variety of issues and contradictions facing the vocational education and training (VET) sector in the UK, and expresses concerns about the use of open learning to solve these. Suggests the establishment of an open polytechnic offering flexible programs of study as a way of managing the contradictions faced by the VET sector. The aims of the open polytechnic are outlined and appear to be similar in many respects to current DEET(SA) expectations of institutes of Vocational Education in South Australia.

Flexible Delivery Working Party 1992, *Flexible delivery: A national framework for implementation in TAFE*, The Working Party, South Brisbane.
Defines flexible delivery (pp.1 and 47) and explains its role in supporting the national training reform agenda. The framework is for Australian TAFE systems and supports State and Territory initiatives in implementing flexible delivery within this sector. The report sets six national goals for the implementation of flexible delivery within TAFE, indicates where national co-ordination will be required to achieve these goals, and also provides details for six national projects supporting these goals (pp.43–44). Includes a useful bibliography.

Foks, J, 1988, *Open learning in the Victorian State Training System*, Ministry of Education, Melbourne.
Outlines the need for open learning strategies to be incorporated into the mainstream of the State Training System's program. The report addresses a range of issues associated with doing this and highlights the associated organisational changes which will need to be made. Includes a summary of the open learning activities offered by many Victorian TAFE colleges at the time of the report's preparation.

Goode, T W, 1993, *Strategic planning for open learning*, National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd, Leabrook, South Australia.
Although this report primarily examines the planning and development phases of Tea Tree Gully College in SA, and Stage 1 of the Joondalup Campus of North Metropolitan College in WA, it also examines broader issues of importance to the current project, such as the two 'types' of open learning generally employed in Australian vocational education and training and the move towards their convergence (pp.38–40). Other issues (e.g. the use of technology, changes to the curriculum, and staff development) discussed in Part 4 are also of potential interest as are the sections in Part 1 covering terminology and methodology (pp.2–5). The methodology section indicates the author may be able to advise the current project team of other examples of the use of alternative delivery methodologies within the TAFE and University sectors in Australia.

'Greenfield site to open learning', 1992, *Adult Ed News*, July, pp.1 & 13–15.
In a wide-ranging interview Michael Sachsse (Director of Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE) discusses some of the basic economic, social and educational considerations in planning the new Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE. Michael outlines how student-centred learning operates at the college and briefly discusses the place within this of self-paced learning, resource-based learning, open entry/open exit, CBT, RPL, and simulated work environments. He briefly mentions student reactions to the college's learning methodologies.

Gunning, D, 1993, 'Lessons learned in Scottish competence-based systems' in *What future for vocational education and training?*, ed. William C. Hall, NCVER, Adelaide, pp. 123–144.
The author, the Director of Assessment Services of SCOTVEC, summarises the huge changes which have taken place in the Scottish vocational education and training sector over the past 10 years. The results of these changes are examined and the successes arising from their introduction are outlined. One outstanding success has been the great increase in the number of people studying in the vocational education and training sector; the author attributes this to the introduction of flexible, modular, self-paced training courses which cater for learner's needs and interests and which also allow for the recognition of prior learning.

Hall, W, 1988, 'Open learning' *Australian Journal of TAFE Research and Development*, vol 3, no 2, pp.1–5.
Explains what open learning is and is not and discusses some of the practical implications of TAFE adopting an open learning approach.

Holland, S, 1993, 'Quality improvement in the vocational education and training industry' in *What future for vocational education and training?*, ed. William C. Hall, NCVER, Adelaide, pp.187–197.
The author (General Manager, Quality Assurance and Customer Services, NSW TAFE Commission) examines the role of Australian TAFE systems in helping to implement the national training reform agenda. TAFE systems responding to this agenda are also undergoing restructuring themselves and the author outlines how NSW TAFE has been meeting the challenge of maintaining and improving the quality of its products and services while responding to internal and external pressures for change.

Improving Australia's training system, 1989, AGPS, Canberra.
This document (circulated by the Minister for Employment, Education and Training) reiterates the government's determination to reform Australian vocational education and training arrangements to enhance the skills of the workforce and hence the process of national economic development. It flags the first special conference of relevant Commonwealth and State Ministers to be held on 28 April 1989 with the brief of establishing a training reform agenda (p.32). This document again emphasises the need to measure achievement through the development of competence rather than time served, the need for more flexible, broadly-based and modular approaches to training and the need for improved access to entry-level training and retraining. It also advocates better articulation and credit transfer between different forms and levels of education and training with the consequent need to recognise prior training and experience.

Johnson, R, 1990, *Open learning: Policy and practice*, NBEET commissioned report no. 4, AGPS, Canberra.
Describes open learning and advocates its use in education on the basis that it is founded in equity and is a cost-effective way of providing education and training. Considers some of the advantages and risks associated with an open learning approach and examines the implications of using it in the tertiary education sector. (NBEET, the commissioner of this report, is the principal independent advisory body to the Federal Minister for Employment, Education and Training.)

Kirby, P, 1989, 'Open learning and TAFE', *Open Learning Newsletter*, no 2, p.[1].
The author, CEO of DETAFE, emphasises the need for DETAFE to adopt open learning as a supplement to conventional education delivery. He believes open learning will allow more underskilled and home-bound people to take part in training, leading to an increase in skill levels in the workforce and a consequent improvement in our international economic standing. He suggests using criteria such as the increased numbers of students gaining access to TAFE training, and the improved flexibility and quality of training programs, to evaluate the open learning systems adopted by TAFE.

The language and structures of the national training reform agenda, 1992, DETAFE, Adelaide.
Draws on authoritative sources to:
- summarise the background to the national training reform agenda;
- summarise the key reports associated with the agenda;
- provide a glossary of the terms associated with the agenda;
- outline the key organisations involved in changes to the training system in Australia and the structures supporting these changes;
- list the acronyms commonly occurring in documents dealing with the agenda.

Included is comprehensive bibliography.

Lewis, R, 1986, 'What is open learning?', *Open Learning*, June, pp.5–10.
The author, a leader in the field of open learning in the UK, defines open learning, outlines its characteristics, and discusses how it can remove some of the barriers to learning inherent in conventional provision of education. Tabulates an open-closed learning continuum which can be used to indicate the openness of a learning scheme.

Loveband, R, et al., 1991, 'An evaluation of open learning' *Networking: the TAFE LEARN Network Newsletter*, vol 2, no 4, pp.2–3.
Briefly summarises evaluations of student response to a subject from the Advanced Certificate in Urban Horticulture which was piloted in open learning mode at Brookway Park School of Horticulture in August–December 1990. The subject consisted of on-campus and off-campus study components, was resource-based

and partially self-paced. The evaluations—based on responses to 3 questionnaires—showed that students felt positive about studying this way and had become more independent and resourceful learners with higher levels of motivation and achievement as a result of studying in open learning mode.

Mathers, R, 1988, *Educationally and cost effective modes of student learning and course delivery in the USA, Canada and England for vocational TAFE equivalent courses*, South Australian Department of TAFE, Adelaide.
Reports on the author's overseas study tour to investigate ways in which DETAFE's course offerings, delivery methods, etc. might be made more educationally effective and cost-effective. Focusses on innovative teaching and learning methods (teleconferencing, computer-based education, etc.) and on ways in which TAFE might co-operate with industry to improve its effectiveness and efficiency. On-campus open learning was investigated as were the roles of college staff and management in the introduction of innovative teaching/learning methodologies. Comments briefly on the educational effectiveness of the methodologies reviewed and qualitatively assesses the cost-effectiveness of open learning compared with more traditional methodologies. The author highlights a number of critical issues to be addressed before TAFE in Australia moves towards more open and student-managed forms of learning. Includes contact details for the people and organisations visited but does not include a bibliography.

Meeting the costs of training: A submission to the Training Costs Review Committee, Canberra, 1990, VTOCN, Melbourne.
Advocates the adoption of a cost-effective, flexible learning system by all public and private training providers so that they will be able to cope with the expected increase in demand for industry training. Discusses the changes which will need to be made in allocation of funds to support this initiative and the changes in attitude which will be required on the part of government, employers, teachers, etc. if the system-wide introduction of flexible learning is to be successful. Emphasises that training should not be seen as a cost, but as an investment in Australia's economic and social future.

Miller, B, 1989, *Developing an infrastructure model for the future delivery of open learning in SA TAFE: A discussion paper*, Department of TAFE, Adelaide.
Proposes an infrastructure which will enable SA TAFE to meet the requirements placed on it for quality, access and productivity in the provision of vocational education and training. The current (1988) system for delivery of open learning is outlined, and from the experience gained through its use, a set of principles and a model are proposed for a future open learning delivery infrastructure within SA TAFE.

Miller, B, 1992, *DETAFE open-learning policy*, DETAFE, Adelaide.
Establishes the parameters for the open-learning approach to be adopted by South Australian TAFE colleges and describes the context in which this approach will operate. Outlines the principles underpinning the delivery of DETAFE courses and proposes strategies to assist in their application and to help in developing and implementing open learning within DETAFE courses. DETAFE initiatives and services to support open learning in South Australian TAFE colleges are also outlined.

Mitchell, J, (ed.) 1989?, *Report on establishing open learning at Light College of TAFE October 1987-September 1988*, DETAFE, Adelaide.
Open learning, involving the use of a variety of communications technology as well as 'self-instruction booklets' and face-to-face sessions, was introduced at Light College to improve student access to courses. John Mitchell (Chairperson of the Open Learning Sub-committee) reports on the philosophy underlying its introduction and the strategies used to implement it. Costs and savings and support mechanisms for students and staff are discussed and evaluations of open learning programs at Light College are presented. Difficulties and failures associated with the implementation of open learning at Light College are included in the report. Includes a brief report on 'Open learning in Victorian DTAFE' prepared by three staff members following their study tour in June 1988 of several Victorian TAFE colleges and bodies involved in open learning.

Murphy, M, 1992, 'Training and education reform: The structures', *Scholastic Times*, February, pp.4–5.
Presents a coherent, well-argued case for the Federal Labour Government's establishment of a national training reform agenda, with its emphasis on competency-based training, greater convergence of general and vocational education, flexible pathways for training, and the need for credit transfer and the recognition of prior learning. (Michael Murphy is the Principal Adviser, Vocational Education and Training Division, DEET (Commonwealth)).

Relative costs of open learning: Report, 1988, unpublished report prepared for the Training Agency, Department of Education and Science, and NEDO, November 1988.
Reports on a survey of a range of fifty UK companies using open learning to train their employees, and presents ten case studies examining the costs to companies of open learning relative to the costs of traditional forms of training. For companies choosing open learning as a training approach, its logistical advantages were at least as important as its cost advantages. The report stresses the importance of providing high quality support to trainees using open learning. A checklist is included (Appendix A) to help companies decide whether open learning is the best choice to meet their training needs.

Resources and services to support open learning and flexible delivery within the South Australian Department of Employment and Technical and Further Education (DETAFE), 1993, DETAFE, Adelaide.
Provides brief summaries of a variety of organisations, services and publications which support open learning and flexible delivery within DETAFE, and also lists relevant national and state projects concerned with open learning and flexible delivery. Where applicable, provides contact details so that the reader can obtain further information if required.

Rumble, G, 1987, 'Why distance education can be cheaper than conventional education', *Distance Education*, vol 8, no 1, pp.72–94.
Although this paper is concerned with the cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness of distance education (particularly at the higher education level), it makes a number of points relevant to the type of open learning which Tea Tree Gully has adopted. An important conclusion in the paper is that 'it is obviously not worth investing considerable sums in an enterprise if the end result is a product that may be cheap in money terms, but is also of poor quality' (p.86). A corollary of this is how do we measure the quality of output (our graduates) and how do we estimate the value added to the student as a result of their studies? A practical and thought-provoking paper.

Sachsse, M, 1990, *Report on study tour of Canada and the USA, 16 April to 25 May 1990*, Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE, Adelaide.
Provides a summary of the author's participation in the 70th Annual Convention of American Community and Junior colleges and of his visits to six colleges, five of which (all in the USA) have adopted innovative learning strategies like those proposed for Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE. His study tour encompassed an examination of the strategies being adopted by these colleges to produce more graduates in a cost-effective manner, and to equip graduates with broad generic skills to help them cope with change. The report summarises the author's impressions of the colleges he visited and highlights one or more of their special features. It is supplemented by additional information (listed in the report) which is available on request from the author.

Sachsse, M, 1993, 'Cost effectiveness of open learning', unpublished memo to staff at Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE, Tea Tree Gully, Adelaide, 31 March 1993.
Unpublished in-house response to a communication from the CEO, DETAFE, which showed that Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE had the lowest productivity of all SA TAFE colleges for the previous year. The college director provides reasons for such statistics and predicts that the cost per credit hour for the Tea Tree Gully operation will fall substantially over the next 12 months.

Sachsse, M, 1993, 'Not more of the same: Implementing the national training reform agenda', unpublished draft of a paper presented to the AUSTAFE Conference, Canberra, 27 September 1993.

Outlines the events and reasoning which led to Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE adopting particular teaching/learning methodologies, delivery systems and operational structures. The paper overall emphasises the role of Tea Tree Gully in modelling strategies and practices aimed at dealing with change in the workplace.

Sanguinetti, J, 1987, 'What is open learning? What does it mean for TAFE?', *Victorian TAFE Papers*, no 6, pp.23–25.
The author (Open Learning Liaison Officer with TOCCA) briefly defines open learning and relates its use to the requirement for social equity within TAFE outlined in the Kangan report of 1974. Summarises the outcome of six state-wide seminars on open learning conducted throughout Victoria and concludes that the use of open learning has the capacity to help redress social inequity and to provide cost-effective training, thus improving the social and economic well-being of society.

Schofield, K, 1991, 'A challenge for all of us', *Open Learning Newsletter*, no.4, p.[1].
The author, CEO of DETAFE, outlines the mission of DETAFE and the role of open learning in supporting this. She discusses factors influencing vocational education and training in Australia and reiterates the need for DETAFE to build an even stronger open learning model in response to the demands being placed on it.

Skills for Australia, 1987, AGPS, Canberra.
The Australian Government believes a more highly-skilled workforce will help to improve our international competitiveness. Arising from this belief, this Commonwealth Government document outlines the decisions made in the 1987–88 budget to improve our education and training system and the levels of initial and ongoing participation in it. Of particular interest in the Tea Tree Gully context is the government's belief in the importance of workers possessing both broad transferable skills and specific vocational skills, and the need to emphasise competence achieved rather than time served in training. The government sees the need for:

- increased flexibility and quality in our education and training systems;
- greater productivity from our education and training resources (including staffing and program offerings);
- TAFE to offer training in areas of current skills and labour market shortages (tourism, hospitality, computing, etc.);
- allocation of Commonwealth funds for education and training to be on a competitive basis and linked to performance, labour market demands and national economic and industry development objectives.

TAFE 1990: Commonwealth programs and priorities, 1989, AGPS, Canberra.
Circulated by the Minister for Employment, Education and Training, this report sets out a national framework for resource

agreements between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories for TAFE in 1990. It outlines the implications of award restructuring for Australian education and training systems including the need for improved access to training (especially for disadvantaged groups), increased emphasis on attainment of competency, recognition of prior training, and more flexible, broadly-based and modular approaches to on-the-job and off-the-job training. It stresses the need for improved productivity and efficiency in the use of TAFE resources (staff, physical facilities, etc.) and emphasises the government's intention to fund projects which are beneficial to economic productivity.

Taylor, J & White, V, 1991, *The evaluation of the cost-effectiveness of multi-media mixed-mode teaching and learning*, AGPS, Canberra.
This DEET-funded report pertaining to higher education primarily examines the cost-effectiveness of offering four study units at the University College of Southern Queensland (UCSQ)—a DEC (Distance Education Centre)—by mixed-mode delivery (an integration of face-to-face teaching and distance education techniques). The report concluded that only a DEC already offering a unit in distance mode can realistically afford to offer the unit in mixed-mode. Student learning through mixed-mode at UCSQ remains lock-step, with students gaining basic knowledge from the instructional packages prior to attending a (usually) reduced number of lectures and tutorials. The report briefly discusses the attitudes of staff and students towards mixed-mode learning.

Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE, 1992, Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE, Adelaide.
Glossy tri-fold publicity brochure, produced after the opening of the new college, which very briefly summarises some of the key concepts and special features associated with the new college. One page is devoted to favourable student and staff comments about the way the college functions.

Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE 1989 Annual Report, 1990, Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE, Adelaide.
Of particular interest is the Principal's report where he mentions changes in the new college's educational programs and discusses the magnitude of the change in learning methodologies which will be generated by the introduction of self-paced learning in the new college.

Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE 1990 Annual Report, [1991?], Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE, Adelaide.
Covers the final full year of the college at the old site on Montague Road and outlines progress on development of the new college, its educational programs and services, and on the staff development undertaken. The reports of the College Council President, and the College Director highlight goals achieved so far and those not yet fully met. The charter of the new college is briefly outlined on page 6 of the report.

Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE: A college for the 21st Century, 1988, Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE, Adelaide.
This document supported the application to the Minister of Employment, Education and Training for funding to build the new Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE. It is a key document which summarises the rationale behind the college's proposed teaching/learning methodologies. The overall emphasis of the submission is on the new college's ability to achieve more appropriate student outcomes for greater numbers of students at reduced cost.

Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE: A college for the 21st Century, 1990, Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE, Adelaide.
This glossy sixteen page publicity brochure, printed prior to the opening of the new college, outlines the rationale behind the establishment of the college and briefly sets out some of its features, including its educational programs and charter. Pages 8 and 9 briefly outline the educational and productivity rationale which underlie the charter and summarise issues such as innovative learning strategies, innovative delivery systems, competency-based education, and the practices which will lead to graduates being produced in a more cost-efficient way. These practices include self-paced learning and open entry/open exit to and from courses.

Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE: AIB Professional Excellence in Building Awards 1993, 1993, SACON, Adelaide.
The submission for this award includes the technical information relevant to the building of the new college. It also includes the brief for the college (pp.32–36; duplicated from *Architectural brief [for] Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE 1988*), the TAFE objectives for the project (pp.4–5), and some additional information on the educational requirements of the design (p.40).

Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE: Post-construction evaluation, 1992, DETAFE, Adelaide.
Provides detailed plans of the college and an evaluation of both the new building and the procedures followed in building it. The acknowledgments page and pages 1–2 of the report provide some brief details on how the building design was influenced by the educational methodologies and new technologies which the college will pilot.

Toussaint, D, 1990, *Fleximode: Within Western Australia TAFE*, TAFE National Centre for Research and Development, Adelaide.
Provides a well-researched account of the use of fleximode (defined as a pre-planned combination of on-campus and off-campus study) in Australian TAFE courses up to 1990, and reports in detail on the use of fleximode for delivering six WA TAFE courses in 1989. Comparing course delivery by fleximode with traditional classroom and correspondence teaching, the report analyses student and staff evaluations of fleximode, whether mode of course delivery contributed to student withdrawal from courses, and the relative cost-effectiveness of fleximode. Section 8 examines qualitative differences in student perceptions of fleximode compared with

traditional delivery methods, and Section 9 draws conclusions about the possible benefits and drawbacks of fleximode. Includes a useful bibliography.

Ward, B, et al., 1979, *Tea Tree Gully Community College: An educational brief*, Department of Further Education, Adelaide.
Quantifies the educational need of adults in the Tea Tree Gully area at the time of publication. Based on these figures and projected future demand, the report recommends the 'provision of a major new college building' to serve the vocational, technical and 'enrichment' education needs of this fast-growing community. Specific program areas are proposed, as is a child-care facility and a possible joint-use library. The report stresses the need for flexibility in the plans for the building, to take account of any unforeseen future changes in public need.

White, K & Watson, M, 1990, 'Designing an open learning structure: The TAFE Joondalup Campus' in *Proceedings of the Australian Society for Educational Technology (WA Chapter) conference 'Open learning and new technology' June 1990*, The Chapter with the assistance of the External studies Unit, Murdoch University, Claremont, WA, pp.330–346.
Concentrates on the physical planning of Joondalup but addresses some broader issues as well. Of particular interest are pages 330–331 & 339–342 which cover issues such as the forces currently directing change in TAFE—the way it is structured and staffed, its program offerings, its teaching/learning philosophies and methodologies—and consequent changes in the roles of TAFE staff and their interactions with clients.

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Hiola, Y and Moss, G D, 1990, 'Student opinion of tutorial provision in the Universitas Terbuka of Indonesia', *Open Learning* vol. 5 no. 2 pp.34–38.

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Johnson, R, 1990, *Open Learning: Policy and Practice*, Australian National Board of Employment, Education and Training, AGPS, Canberra.

Key competencies: Report of the Committee to advise the Australian Education Council and Ministers of Vocational Education, Employment and Training on employment related key competencies for postcompulsory education and training, 1992, AEC and MOVEET, Melbourne.

MacNamara, Dennis, 1992, *Mixed Up Modes Open Up Learning: The Quality and Equity Cocktail*, Open Training and Education Network, NSW TAFE.

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Acronyms

AEC	Australian Education Council
AUSTAFE	Australian TAFE conferences held annually
DETAFE	Department of Employment, Training and Further Education
LAC	Learning Assistance Centres
MOVEET	Ministers of Vocational Employment, Education and Training
NTB	National Training Board
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SMACIS	Student Monitoring and Course Information System
SMART	Student Management and Record Tracking system
TAFE	Training and Further Education (previously Technical and Further Education)
TSP	Targeted Separation Packages
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

Appendices

Appendix A

Initiatives arising from the national training reform agenda

- competency-based approach to delivery
- assessment based on agreed national standards
- modularisation of learning
- greater flexibility in teaching and learning techniques
- more flexible training pathways
- greater utilization of appropriate learning technologies
- integration of workplace and off-the-job training components
- multiple entry and exit points
- recognition of prior learning

Appendix B

Mission statement and charter of Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE

Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE
A college for the 21st century

Brief overview

Location

The Tea Tree Gully College is the newest TAFE college to be commissioned in South Australia. It is located in the heart of the second largest and most rapidly growing city in the State. By 1995 it is expected to serve a core population of 140 000 and an extended population of 250 000 people.

The College occupies a 5.5 hectare site adjacent to the Tea Tree Plaza commercial complex and is in close proximity to a major public hospital, a number of Federal, State and Local Government offices and to the O'Bahn guided bus rapid transit interchange.

Mission statement

The Tea Tree Gully College is dedicated to the development of self-directed, skilled learners who are responsive to the changing needs of society.

Its charter

- **To produce graduates in areas of identified skills shortage**. The college has chosen a range of educational programs to meet the needs of the information and service industries. Major faculties include computing and information systems, business and commercial studies; electronics and information technology; hospitality; community services.

- **To produce graduates in a more cost effective manner**. To achieve greater productivity the College will adopt innovative strategies including the use of more cost efficient staffing structures; the adoption of a flatter organisational structurel the adoption of self-managing work teams; and the move towards integrating on-the-job and off-the-job training.

- **To produce 'enterprising' graduates**. The College will produce graduates who, in addition to possessing industry specific knowledge and skills, will possess a range of broadly based, transferable skills. These skills, which Finn refers to as key competencies, will equip graduates to better deal with rapid technological and social change. These 'enterprise skills', which include communication, problem solving, creative thinking and team work, will be facilitated through the adoption of learner-centred as opposed to teacher-centred methodologies.

- **To use and develop innovative teaching and learning strategies**. The College will bring together the best examples of the many innovative learning methodologies and practices being trialled within South Australia, interstate and overseas.

Competency-based Training (CBT) will be the platform for these methodologies. CBT will incorporate the following features: recognition of prior learning; open entry/open exit; self-paced learning.

The College will utilise advanced technology for the production and the delivery of its educational programs as well as in the recording of student progress. For example it will employ video-conferencing technology and use computer-based learning systems to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of its educational product.

Other features

Customised Training Unit—This unit has been established to respond to the increasing demand, largely driven by award restructuring, for customised training and the development of learning materials tailored to suit the specific needs or organisations.

Centre for International Education and Training—This consortium, consisting of SAGRIC International, the Department of Employment and TAFE and the College, represents an exciting new endeavour to market Australian training and education capabilities internationally.

Joint Public/TAFE Library—The College is a joint venturer with the City of Tea Tree Gully in the provision of major TAFE/Public Library facility.

Learning Assistance Centres—In addition to the main library, the College has set up four learning assistance centres which are strategically located throughout the complex to provide a smaller, more specialised library service to students in adjacent teaching areas.

Computer Laboratory—In partnership with Apple Australia Pty Ltd, the College has established a computer laboratory which features state of the art computing equipment. This is an addition to its extensive computing facilities.

Student Amenities—Students will have access to a well equipped gymnasium, tennis courts, a 40 place child care centre, a comprehensive bookshop, a cafeteria and student lounge.

Access—Through its special architectural brief the College has set new standards in catering for persons with disabilities. Furthermore, through the adoption of individualised learning systems, the College has effectively integrated equal opporotunities practices into it programs.

Student Accommodation—The College has access to McLean House (ex nurses home) which features 250 bed low cost accommodation which can be used by overseas and country students.

Appendix C

Educational and productivity rationale for Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE

THE CONTEXT

INDUSTRIAL	ECONOMIC	SOCIAL
Restructuring	More Training	Social Justice
Technological	Same Resources	Environment
Change	Productivity	Multiculturalism

⇓

REQUIRED STUDENT PROFILE

Industry Specific Knowledge
Industry Specific Skill
Enterprise Skills

⇓

EDUCATIONAL METHODOLOGY	LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	COLLEGE OPERATIONS
Student-Centred Learning	Learning Assistance Centres	Staffing Structure
Competency-Based Learning	Simulated Work Environment	Organisational Structure
Resource-Based Learning	Work Place Training	Management Style
	Staff Philosophy	Architecture

⇓

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Immediately Productive Knowledge and Skills
Self-Directed Life-Long Learners
Able to Adapt to Change and Promote an Enterprising Culture

PLANNING ⇒

FACILITATION ⇐

Appendix D

1992–93 Staffing structure

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Appendix E

Project Time Schedule
September 1992–August 1994

	Student Group 1992	Student Group 1993	Staff
Phase 1	Interviews		
(16.9.92-4.12.92)	Questionnaires		Interviews
			Questionnaires
	First Interim Report Due 20 November 1992		
Phase 2		Interviews and Questionnaires	
(22.2.93-30.7.93			Follow-up Interviews
	Second Interim Report Due 31 July 1993		
Phase 3	Follow-up Interviews		
(16.8.93-1.11.93)			
	Follow-up Questionnaires		Follow-up Questionnaires
		Follow-up Interviews and Questionnaires	
	Third Interim Report Due 30 November 1993		
Phase 4	Critical-Integrative analysis of data and writing of final report due 31 August 1994		
(Dec'93-Aug '94)			

Appendix F

Summary of the number of staff and student interviews and questionnaires conducted

Summary of questionnaires returned and response rates (in brackets)

	Initial	Follow-up	Sub-total
Student group 1992	322/993 (32%)	30/83 (36%)	352
Student group 1993	226/618 (37%)	21/53 (33%)	247
Staff	63/203 (31%)	34/204 (17%)	97
		Total	**696**

Breakdown of interviews conducted

Student group 1992	93
Student group 1993	69
Staff	37
Total	**199**

Appendix G

Initial interview questions for student group 1992

Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE
Learner interview questions
Student group 1992

Note: Three types of questions—educational background; prior perceptions of TTG TAFE and open learning; present perceptions. Present perceptions to include questions on TTG's learning methodology.

A Educational profile of learners

1 Are you aged under 20 yrs? ☐
20-30 yrs? ☐
over 30 yrs? ☐

2 Are you a full or part time student?

3 Do you receive Austudy?

4 Are you currently employed? Full time or part time?

5 What year level did you leave school? Were you eligible to attend university?

6 Have you studied any other courses since leaving school? If yes, describe, including any qualifications.

7 What module/s are you studying within your program area?

8 Why are you studying within this program area?

9 When did you start this course? (Time of semester)
When do you expect to complete the course?

10 Did you seek any counselling before enrolling in this course? If so what? Was this counselling adequate?

11 How long after enrolling before starting the course?

12 Did you undertake a pre-vocational course? At TTG? Were there any other entry requirements?

B Learner prior expectations of TTG TAFE and open learning

13 What had you heard about TTG before commencing your studies?

14 Why did you choose TTG to do your study?

15 From a learning viewpoint, what did you expect at TTG?

16 Is it different from what you expected? If so, how?

17 What type of job do you aspire to on completion of your course? Give job title/s if known.

C Learner views of open learning at TTG TAFE

Questions to incorporate TTG's OPEN LEARNING METHODOLOGY

Student centred

18 How is the TTG learning environment different from your previous learning environment (e.g. school) with regard to learning materials, other resources, teachers, classroom setup, student support services, library, other?

19 Has any recognition of prior learning been given?

20 Did you have any say in the date that you started your study at TTG?

21 Do you progress in your study at your own pace? If so, what are the benefits to you?

22 Do you actively participate in your learning environment?

23 Do you receive frequent feedback on your work? Is this feedback useful?

24 Can you choose your learning activities for each topic studied? If so, are there several choices of activities?

25 Can you choose in which order you study topics?

26 Is there much flexibility about the time and place at which your study can occur?

Key Competencies

27 Did your course clearly state its learning objectives at the beginning?

28 Were you clear about the competencies you were expected to achieve?

29 Are you confident that you are gaining the necessary skills and knowledge and attitudes to make you employable?

30 In your chosen career which of the following skills do you consider are important/relevant:
- identifying and solving problems
- communicating effectively in written and oral form
- planning and organising work and time efficiently
- working as part of a team
- showing initiative

- accessing and using information
- adapting to constant change

31 Give an example of where you have utilised these skills in your study at TTG.

32 To what extent have these skills been enhanced during your study at TTG?

Resource-based

33 What of the following learning resources have been made available to you at TTG?

☐ print	☐ film	☐ audio
☐ computer facilitator	☐ fellow students	☐ industry experts
☐ other		

34 How do you find the learning materials in terms of
- availability
- clarity
- general usefulness (do they help in the learning process)?

Student support

35 What support have you received from student services? Describe what other services they provide that you know about but haven't had to use.

36 How useful was the induction program that you undertook before starting your studies at TTG?

Ergonomics

37 Is the physical environment of TTG satisfactory? Comment on your classroom and work area, the lighting, noise level, pollution, adequate facilities (restrooms, creche, cafeteria, gym etc). What could be improved here? What stands out as excellent?

Appendix H

Initial interview questions for student group 1993

Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE
Learner interview questions
Student group 1993

A Educational profile of learners

1 a Do you receive Austudy? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable
b If not, why not?

2 Have you applied to undertake a university course? If yes, what course? Were you successful in your application?

3 Have you studied any other courses since leaving school? If yes, describe, including any qualifications.

4 Are you studying for job prospects? If not, what reason? (Hobby, intellectual stimulation etc.)

5 Do you intend to complete your course in a shorter time span or longer time span than the scheduled time?

6 Did you seek any counselling before enrolling in this course? If so, what? Was this counselling adequate?

B Learner prior expectations of TTG TAFE and open learning

7 What had you heard about TTG before commencing your studies?

8 Why did you choose TTG to do your study?

9 a What did you expect about the way you would learn?
b Is it different from what you expected?

C Learner views of open learning at TTG TAFE

Questions to incorporate TTG's OPEN LEARNING METHODOLOGY

Student centred

10 Was your previous learning environment (e.g. school) different from TTG's learning environment?

11 Has any recognition of prior learning been given?

12 Did you get your preferred starting date for your studies?

13 Do you progress in your study at your own pace? If so, what are the benefits to you?

14 Do you actively participate in your learning environment?

15 Do you receive frequent feedback on your work? Is this feedback useful?

16 Can you choose your learning activities for each topic studied? If so, are there several choices of activities?

17 Can you choose in which order you study topics?

18 Is there much flexibility about the time and place at which your study can occur? (e.g. can you study at home, alternative class)

Key competencies

19 Did your course clearly state its learning objectives at the beginning?

20 Were you clear about the competencies you were expected to achieve?

21 Are you confident that you are gaining the necessary skills and knowledge and attitudes to make you employable?

22 In your chosen career which of the following skills do you consider are important/relevant:

1 identifying and solving problems
2 communicating effectively in written and oral form
3 planning and organising work and time efficiently
4 working as part of a team
5 showing initiative
6 accessing and using information
7 adapting to constant change

Resource-based

23 a Are there adequate resources? (e.g. computers, video, audio, printed materials?)
b Do you have adequate access to them?

Student support

24 What support have you received from student services? Describe what other services they provide that you know about but haven't had to use.

25 a Was the general orientation program that you undertook before starting your studies at TTG useful?
b Was the specific orientation program in your particular program area useful?

Appendix I

Comparison of student group 1992 and 1993—results of Likert Scales

	Control over									
	Content	Style of Learning	Place of Study	Time of Study	Pace of Study	Group Work	Educational Media Used	Required Competencies Clear?	Development of Enterprise Skills	Involved in Active Assessment
Initial										
Student Group 1	AV=3.18	3.42	3.64	3.68	3.61	3.47	2.97	4.05	3.83	3.44
(n=322)	SD=1.32	1.22	1.30	1.32	1.31	1.18	1.46	1.11	1.16	1.40
Student Group 2	3.67	3.84	4.00	3.96	3.90	3.61	3.07	4.22	3.93	3.55
(n=226)	0.99	0.96	1.07	1.03	.099	1.06	1.43	1.43	1.00	1.30
Follow up										
Student Group 1	2.48	3.32	3.45	3.38	3.72	3.35	2.80	3.25	3.75	2.91
(n=30)	1.43	1.44	1.62	1.57	1.31	1.37	1.47	1.60	1.26	1.58
Student Group 2	2.67	2.80	3.71	3.86	3.19	3.28	3.11	3.84	Only 1 out of 21 gave an answer	2.75
(n=21)	1.43	1.41	1.10	1.20	1.57	1.13	1.57	1.43		1.53

Appendix J

Staff interview questions 1992 (teaching and non-teaching staff)

NCVER—TTG College of TAFE
Staff interview questions—1992
Teaching

A Teaching/learning background

1 What was the teaching/learning environment in your formative years? (ie primary and secondary education)

2 a What is the highest qualification for education/training you have?
b Which institution awarded this qualification?

3 Are you currently enrolled in a course to improve your qualifications? If yes, which course and who is the provider of the course?

4 What was your previous position prior to becoming a facilitator at TTG?
If you came from an industry environment, was in-house training provided? If so, what methods were used?

If you came from an educational environment what learning systems were used?

5 How long have you had a professional involvement in flexible learning systems?

6 What induction were you given into the flexible learning system environment? Who provided the induction?

7 Can you identify any barriers for staff in adapting to the flexible learning systems at TTG College?

8 Are you currently involved with any special projects which have a focus outside of TTG College? If yes, please give details.

B Prior perceptions of TTG TAFE and open learning

9 What had you heard about TTG before applying for the position?

10 Why did you choose to work at TTG?

11 From a teaching viewpoint, what did you expect at TTG?

12 Is it different from what you expected? If so, how?

C Teacher views of open learning at TTG TAFE

Student centred

13 What changes have you noticed to students' attitudes to study?

14 Is the methodology achieving the curriculum aims?

15 How successfully are students interacting with the learning environment?

16 Are there disadvantages or trade-offs in the use of flexible learning systems which you would like to mention?

17 If you could have this year again what changes would you make, if any?

Enterprise skills

18 Is the methodology enabling students to acquire enterprise skills? List them.

19 Is there any evidence that the TTG experience is contributing to the independence of students? How?

20 Do your packages clearly state its learning objectives at the beginning?

21 Do you think the students are gaining the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to make them employable?

Resource based

22 Which of the following learning resources have been in use in your program area?

print	☐	video	☐	audio cassettes	☐
computer	☐	facilitator	☐	fellow students	☐
industry experts	☐	other	☐		

23 How would you rate the learning materials in terms of
- availability
- clarity
- general usefulness (how do they help in the learning process?)

24 Do you feel that you have had sufficient time for involvement in learning material development?

Social justice

25 Are designated groups (disabled, women, ethnic, Aboriginal etc) benefiting from the flexible learning systems in your program area? If yes, can you supply details of the case/s?

Community perceptions

26 To what extent does the community of TTG know about the College's learning environment?

27 To what extent do the parents of young students at TTG know and understand about the learning environment of the College?

Ergonomics

28 Is the physical environment of TTG satisfactory? Comment on your work environment and preparation area: the lighting, noise level, pollution, facilities (restrooms, creches, cafeteria, gym etc). What could be improved? What stands out as excellent?

29 If you work at night are you worried about your personal safety? Comment on the environment (that is, well lit and secure?).

Non-teaching

1 What are your impressions of the learning systems offered at TTG College of TAFE?

2 Is this learning system working?

3 a Have you worked in the more traditional teaching/learning environment?
b If yes, where did you work and are you holding a similar position now?
c If yes, are there any differences?

4 Do you find your working environment satisfying? Comments?

5 a What induction were you given into the learning system?
b Who provided this induction?

6 What are your perceptions of the working relationships between the teaching and non-teaching staff?

7 What are your perceptions of the working relationships of teaching staff in the various educational program areas?

8 What do you think about the quality of students at TTG?

9 What is the nature of your interaction with the students?

10 If you were given the power to change (i.e. wave a magical wand)

a what changes would you like to see in your work, and
b what changes would you like to see in the college?

11 Other comments?

Appendix K

Initial questionnaire—student group 1992 and 1993

NCVER - TEA TREE GULLY CAMPUS

INITIAL QUESTIONNAIRE - STUDENT GROUP 1992 AND 1993

This questionnaire is anonymous - do not include your name. On completion either pass it to your facilitator or post it in the box outside the Enquiries Desk in the Atrium area.

1 a Program area: .....

Please circle:

b Full-time/Part-time c Male/Female

d Under 20 years 20-30 years Over 30 years

2 *Austudy entitlements are based on the minimum time required to complete a course.*

Have you had difficulties with obtaining Austudy. YES/NO

If yes, is it because of the lack of awareness of open learning by AUSTUDY agencies? YES/NO

3 a Has anyone told you that you can credit for prior study or prior learning so that you can get exemption from parts of the course? YES/NO

b Have you applied for recognition of prior learning for any module? YES/NO

4 With the emphasis by TTG College on student-centred, self-paced learning, do you consider that a series of introductory lectures/workshops would assist you in the subjects you are studying. YES/NO

If yes, please list the particular subjects:

.....

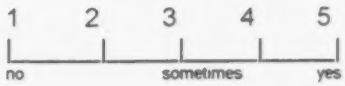
5 *All students enrolled in a recognised award course will be allocated to an individual staff member who will act as a faculty advisor/mentor and be responsible for assisting the student map his/her progress throughout the course of study.*

Do you have a 'faculty advisor'? YES/NO

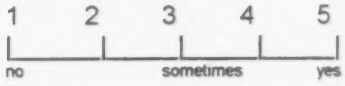
88

6 Do you feel as though you have control over what and how you learn, for example:

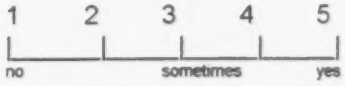
The content



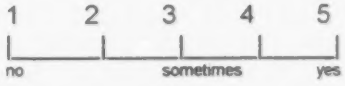
The style of learning



The place of study



The time of study

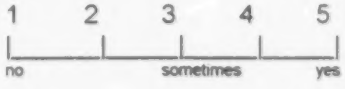


The pace of study

7 a When you began your studies at TTG did the open learning methods appeal to you? YES/NO

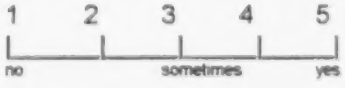
b If no, have you changed your mind since then? YES/NO

8 Does group work enhance your individual progress?

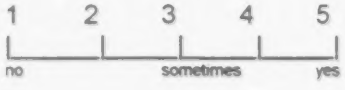


9 Have you used any of the following in your course at TTG College?

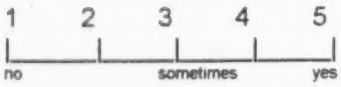
computer assisted learning, interactive video, compact discs, video and tele conference, television by satellite, fibre optics?



10 Are you clear about the competencies required for you to successfully complete your subjects/modules?



11 Are you developing your enterprise skills (key competencies), eg problem solving, communication, team skills, time management, etc at TTG College of TAFE?



12 *Active assessment involves students in making judgements about their performance along with judgements made by their teacher/lecturer.*

Are you involved in 'active assessment' at TTG College?

13 If you have other comments that you would like to add, please do so here.

.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you for participating

Dr Ernst Hintz, Judi Pattinson, Dianne Thiele
Researchers

Appendix L

Comparison of results of 1992 and 1993 initial student questionnaires

	STUDENT GROUP 1992		STUDENT GROUP 1993	
Number of respondents	n = 322		n = 226	
	Actual Number	**%**	**Actual Number**	**%**
MODE OF STUDY				
Full-time	108	34	141	63
Part-time	200	62	82	36
Blank	14	4	3	1
GENDER				
Male	111	34	115	51
Female	180	56	91	40
Blank	31	10	20	9
AGE				
Under 20 years	90	28	88	39
20-30 years	88	27	81	36
Over 30 years	130	41	51	23
Blank	14	4	6	2
Difficulties with obtaining AUSTUDY				
Yes	71	22	35	15
No	119	37	69	31
Blank	132	41	122	54
Question 2(b) If yes, is it because of the lack of awareness of open learning by Austudy agencies.				
Yes	34/71	48	8/35	23
No	60		34	
Blank	228		184	
Question 3(a) Has anyone told you that you can get credit for prior study or prior learning so that you can get exemption from parts of the course.				
Yes	198	61	158	70
No	93	29	58	26
Blank	31	10	10	4
Question 3(b) Have you applied for recognition of prior learning for any modules.				
Yes	57	18	40	18
No	224	70	175	77
Blank	41	12	11	5
Question 4(a) With the emphasis by TTG Campus on student-centred, self-paced learning, do you consider that a series of introductory lectures/workshops would assist you.				
Yes	124	39	116	51
No	165	51	99	44
Blank	33	10	11	5

	STUDENT GROUP 1992		STUDENT GROUP 1993	
Number of respondents	n = 322		n = 226	
	Actual Number	**%**	**Actual Number**	**%**
Question 5 Do you have a faculty advisor.				
Yes	218	68	191	85
No	76	24	20	9
Blank	28	8	15	6
Question 7(a) When you began your studies at TTG Campus did open learning methods appeal to you.				
Yes	243	75	166	74
No	66	20	51	22
Blank	13	5	9	4
Question 7(b) If no. have you changed your mind since then.				
Yes	60/66	91	29/51	57
No	63		44	
Blank	199		153	

Appendix M

Initial staff questionnaire 1992

NCVER - TTG COLLEGE OF TAFE

STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE 1992

This questionnaire is anonymous - do not include your name. On completion please place in the box provided in the Staff Lounge. Please complete and return this questionnaire by Friday 11 December 1992.

1 a Work Team .....

Please circle

b Teaching / Non Teaching c Full-time / Part-time

d How many years have you had an interest in or have worked in an open learning environment? .....

General

1 What is your degree of interaction with other staff members?

1 2 3 4 5
|____|____|____|____|
poor excellent

2 How satisfied are you with the nature of interaction with the students?

1 2 3 4 5
|____|____|____|____|
poor excellent

3 Are you able to provide the support to students that is required?

Yes / No

4 How satisfied are you with providing services for students?

1 2 3 4 5
|____|____|____|____|
poor excellent

5 To what extend do departmental structures/systems assist or support the open learning environment?

1 2 3 4 5
|____|____|____|____|
poor excellent

6 If you could have this year again, what changes would you make to your working environment, if any.

.....

.....

.....

Teaching Staff

1 How successful are you in adjusting to the :

a) student centred approach

1 2 3 4 5
|____|____|____|____|
poor excellent

b) self pacing approach

1 2 3 4 5
|____|____|____|____|
poor excellent

c) team approach

1 2 3 4 5
|____|____|____|____|
poor excellent

d) resource based learning

1 2 3 4 5
|____|____|____|____|
poor excellent

e) becoming a facilitator rather than a lecturer/teacher

1 2 3 4 5
|____|____|____|____|
poor excellent

2 What is the main area of adjustment that you have had to make to TTG open learning environment? Explain

.....

.....

.....

.....

3 How would you rate your degree of satisfaction with your role as facilitator/manager of the learning process?

4 During this past year how successful has the implementation of flexible learning systems been at TTG College of TAFE?

5 Within your program area how would you rate the degree of success of flexible learning systems?

6 What level of enterprise skills will the graduating students take into the workplace?

7 Are enterprise skills being incorporated into the modules within your program area?

8 If you have any other comments that you would like to add, please do so here.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you for participating.

Dr Ernst Hintz, Judi Pattinson, Dianne Thiele
Researchers

Appendix N

Follow-up interview questions student group 1992 and 1993

Ascertain status of student, age, gender, name and address details

1 How do you feel about ending your studies at TTG Campus and entering the job market?

2 Would you have liked more structured sessions/tutorials? Would you have liked to see introductory lectures?

3 Have you studied or applied for another course somewhere else since leaving school (even if you didn't complete it)? If so, did you receive recognition of prior learning?

4 Generally how did you relate to your facilitators? Did you receive adequate assistance?

5 The majority of students interviewed last year came to TTG Campus because it was close to home, not because of the flexible learning systems available. Is this the case with you? What about others that you know?

6 Would you like to make any comments on the advantages and disadvantages of group work?

7 Would you like to make any comments about the quality of the learning materials? The resources? e.g. did they improve over the course of your study?

8 Have you any suggestions on how the orientation sessions (both general and program specific) could be improved?

9 Do you have any comments about Student Services at TTG Campus?

10 Would you like to elaborate on any questions in the questionnaire sent out to you recently? e.g. enterprise skills, austudy, recognition of prior learning, introductory workshops, liaison officers, control over learning, opinion of open learning methods, group work, available resources, required competencies, active assessment. *(Refer to questionnaire)*

11 Are there are any other issues that you would like to comment on that were not covered in the questionnaire? e.g. What changes (if any) would you like to see or have seen in your learning environment at TTG Campus?

Appendix O

Follow-up questionnaire student group 1992

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA
TEA TREE GULLY COLLEGE OF TAFE
EVALUATION PROJECT
STUDENT GROUP 1992 FOLLOW UP QUESTIONNAIRE **SEPTEMBER 1993**

This questionnaire is anonymous - do not include your name. On completion mail it in the prepaid envelope provided prior to Friday 17 September 1993.

Please circle:

GENDER: Male Female

AGE LEVEL: Under 20 years 20-30 years Over 30 years

THERE ARE TWO PARTS TO THIS QUESTIONNAIRE - PART A AND PART B. BOTH PARTS ARE TO BE ANSWERED.

PART A - STATUS OF STUDENT

ONLY ANSWER **ONE** QUESTION - EITHER QUESTION 1, 2, 3 **OR** 4.

EITHER

1 **STILL STUDYING AT TEA TREE GULLY** **YES/NO**

If yes please answer the following:

(a) Are you in same program area as last year YES/NO

(b) If yes, state which program area .....

(c) If no, state both program areas 1992 .....

1993 .....

OR

2 **STILL STUDYING BUT NOT AT TEA TREE GULLY** **YES/NO**

If yes, please answer the following:

(a) Describe where you are studying, give the name of the course and the particular subjects/modules you are studying and the length of the course

.....

.....

.....

97

OR

3 COMPLETED TTG STUDIES AND NOW WORKING YES/NO

If yes, please answer the following:

(a) Did you seek employment in your vocational area studied at TTG? YES/NO

(b) Are you employed in your vocational area studied at TTG YES/NO

If yes, answer questions in Box A. If no, answer questions in Box B.

BOX A - YES

Are you employed full or part time? FULLTIME/PARTTIME

Which enterprise skills that you gained at TTG have been most beneficial to you in your employment?

.....

.....

With respect to enterprise skills, do you feel that the methodology of learning contributed to your level of enterprise skills? *Please circle a number:*

1	2	3	4	5
no		sometimes		yes

BOX B - NO

Are you still keen to gain employment in your vocational area studied? YES/NO

(a) If not, why not?

.....

(b) If yes, do you consider that you have developed enough skills to make you employable? (given the current economic situation). YES/NO

OR

4 NO LONGER STUDYING AND LOOKING FOR WORK YES/NO

If yes, please answer the following:

(a) Are you looking for work in your vocational area studied at TTG? YES/NO

(b) Are you still keen to gain employment in your vocational area studied? YES/NO

(c) If not, why not?

.....

(d) If yes, do you consider that you have developed enough skills to make you employable? (given the current economic situation). YES/NO

PART B - GENERAL QUESTIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS

Have you CHANGED YOUR OPINION on any of the following issues that we questioned you on last year? If you answer YES, please provide additional information where indicated.

1 AUSTUDY **YES/NO/NOT APPLICABLE**

If yes, please answer the following:

-Did you have any difficulties obtaining Austudy when you first commenced your studies at TTG? YES/NO
-If so, has the situation improved since the last survey? YES/NO

Comments: .....

2 RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING **YES/NO**

If yes, please answer the following:

-Have you received any recognition of prior learning? YES/NO
-If you are still studying, do you intend or have you now received recognition of prior learning? YES/NO

3 INTRODUCTORY LECTURES/WORKSHOPS **YES/NO**

If yes, please answer the following:

-If you are studying, has there been an increased use of introductory lectures/workshops in your program area? YES/NO
-If yes, has this been beneficial? YES/NO
-If not, would you like to see more introductory lectures/workshops? YES/NO

4 FACULTY ADVISOR/LIAISON OFFICER **YES/NO**

If yes, please answer the following:

-Did you have a faculty advisor (liaison officer)? YES/NO
-If yes, was s/he helpful and able and willing to assist you when necessary? YES/NO
-If no, would you have liked to have had one? YES/NO

5 CONTROL OVER LEARNING **YES/NO**

If yes, please answer the following by circling a number:

Did you feel as though you had control over what and how you learnt, for example:

The content	1	2	3	4	5
	no		sometimes		yes
The style of learning	1	2	3	4	5
	no		sometimes		yes
The place of study	1	2	3	4	5
	no		sometimes		yes
The time of study	1	2	3	4	5
	no		sometimes		yes
The pace of study	1	2	3	4	5
	no		sometimes		yes

PART B - continued

Have you CHANGED YOUR OPINION on any of the following issues that we questioned you on last year? If you answer YES, please provide additional information where indicated.

6 OPINION OF OPEN LEARNING METHODS

Since last year have you changed your mind about whether the open learning methods appeal to you? **YES/NO**

7 GROUP WORK **YES/NO**

If yes, please answer the following:

Did group work enhance your individual progress

1	2	3	4	5
no		sometimes		yes

8 AVAILABLE RESOURCES **YES/NO**

If yes, please answer the following:

Have you used any of the following in your course at TTG Campus? computer assisted learning, interactive video, compact discs, video and teleconference, television by satellite, fibre optics?

1	2	3	4	5
no		sometimes		yes

9 REQUIRED COMPETENCIES **YES/NO**

If yes, please answer the following:

Were you clear about the competencies required for you to successfully complete your subjects/modules?

1	2	3	4	5
no		sometimes		yes

10 ACTIVE ASSESSMENT **YES/NO**

If yes, please answer the following:

Have you been involved in 'active assessment'

1	2	3	4	5
no		sometimes		yes

11 OTHER COMMENTS

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for your time. It is much appreciated.
NCVER Research Team

Appendix P

Follow-up questionnaire student group 1993

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA
TEA TREE GULLY COLLEGE OF TAFE
EVALUATION PROJECT
STUDENT GROUP 1993 FOLLOW UP QUESTIONNAIRE **OCTOBER 1993**

This questionnaire is anonymous - do not include your name. On completion bring it to the interview, or place it in the NCVER box at Reception, or mail it in the prepaid envelope provided prior to Monday 15 November 1993.

Please circle:

GENDER: Male Female

AGE LEVEL: Under 20 years 20-30 years Over 30 years

THERE ARE TWO PARTS TO THIS QUESTIONNAIRE - PART A AND PART B. BOTH PARTS ARE TO BE ANSWERED.

PART A - STATUS OF STUDENT

ONLY ANSWER **ONE** QUESTION - EITHER QUESTION 1, OR 2, OR 3 **OR** 4.

EITHER

1 STILL STUDYING AT TEA TREE GULLY **YES/NO**

If yes please answer the following:

(a) Are you in same program area as last year YES/NO

(b) If yes, state which program area .....

(c) If no, state both program areas 1992 .....

1993 .....

OR

2 STILL STUDYING BUT NOT AT TEA TREE GULLY **YES/NO**

If yes, please answer the following:

(a) Describe where you are studying, give the name of the course and the particular subjects/modules you are studying and the length of the course

.....

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OR

3 COMPLETED TTG STUDIES AND NOW WORKING **YES/NO**

If yes, please answer the following:

(a) Did you seek employment in your vocational area studied at TTG? YES/NO

(b) Are you employed in your vocational area studied at TTG YES/NO

If yes, answer questions in Box A. If no, answer questions in Box B.

BOX A - YES

Are you employed full or part time? FULLTIME/PARTTIME

Which enterprise skills that you gained at TTG have been most beneficial to you in your employment?

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.....

With respect to enterprise skills, do you feel that the methodology of learning contributed to your level of enterprise skills? *Please circle a number:*

1	2	3	4	5
no		sometimes		yes

BOX B - NO

Are you still keen to gain employment in your vocational area studied? YES/NO

(a) If not, why not?

.....

(b) If yes, do you consider that you have developed enough skills to make you employable? (given the current economic situation). YES/NO

OR

4 NO LONGER STUDYING AND LOOKING FOR WORK **YES/NO**

If yes, please answer the following:

(a) Are you looking for work in your vocational area studied at TTG? YES/NO

(b) Are you still keen to gain employment in your vocational area studied? YES/NO

(c) If not, why not?

.....

(d) If yes, do you consider that you have developed enough skills to make you employable? (given the current economic situation). YES/NO

PART B - GENERAL QUESTIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS

Have you CHANGED YOUR OPINION on any of the following issues that we questioned you on last year? If you answer YES, please provide additional information where indicated.

1 **AUSTUDY** **YES/NO/NOT APPLICABLE**

If yes, please answer the following:

-Did you have any difficulties obtaining Austudy when you first commenced your studies at TTG? YES/NO
-If so, has the situation improved since the last survey? YES/NO

Comments: .....

2 **RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING** **YES/NO**

If yes, please answer the following:

-Have you received any recognition of prior learning? YES/NO
-If you are still studying, do you intend or have you now received recognition of prior learning? YES/NO

3 **INTRODUCTORY LECTURES/WORKSHOPS** **YES/NO**

If yes, please answer the following:

-If you are studying, has there been an increased use of introductory lectures/workshops in your program area? YES/NO
-If yes, has this been beneficial? YES/NO
-If not, would you like to see more introductory lectures/workshops? YES/NO

4 **FACULTY ADVISOR/LIAISON OFFICER** **YES/NO**

If yes, please answer the following:

-Did you have a faculty advisor (liaison officer)? YES/NO
-If yes, was s/he helpful and able and willing to assist you when necessary? YES/NO
-If no, would you have liked to have had one? YES/NO

5 **CONTROL OVER LEARNING** **YES/NO**

If yes, please answer the following by circling a number:

Did you feel as though you had control over what and how you learnt, for example:

The content	1	2	3	4	5
	no		sometimes		yes
The style of learning	1	2	3	4	5
	no		sometimes		yes
The place of study	1	2	3	4	5
	no		sometimes		yes
The time of study	1	2	3	4	5
	no		sometimes		yes
The pace of study	1	2	3	4	5
	no		sometimes		yes

PART B - continued

Have you CHANGED YOUR OPINION on any of the following issues that we questioned you on last year? If you answer YES, please provide additional information where indicated.

6 OPINION OF OPEN LEARNING METHODS

Since last year have you changed your mind about whether the open learning methods appeal to you? **YES/NO**

7 GROUP WORK **YES/NO**

If yes, please answer the following:

Did group work enhance your individual progress

1	2	3	4	5
no		sometimes		yes

8 AVAILABLE RESOURCES **YES/NO**

If yes, please answer the following:

Have you used any of the following in your course at TTG Campus? computer assisted learning, interactive video, compact discs, video and teleconference, television by satellite, fibre optics?

1	2	3	4	5
no		sometimes		yes

9 REQUIRED COMPETENCIES **YES/NO**

If yes, please answer the following:

Were you clear about the competencies required for you to successfully complete your subjects/modules?

1	2	3	4	5
no		sometimes		yes

10 ACTIVE ASSESSMENT **YES/NO**

If yes, please answer the following:

Have you been involved in 'active assessment'

1	2	3	4	5
no		sometimes		yes

11 OTHER COMMENTS

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Thank you for your time. It is much appreciated.
NCVER Research Team

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Appendix Q

Follow-up interview questions staff 1993

NCVER/TTG COLLEGE OF TAFE EVALUATION

STAFF FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW
August 1993

DATE .....

PROGRAM AREA ..... TEACHING / NON-TEACHING

A SHIFTS IN PERCEPTION

Hopefully you have had a chance to look at the summary of staff interview responses conducted in November last year which was distributed to you recently. The purpose of this follow-up interview is to monitor any shifts in your perceptions of the effectiveness of the learning methods and practices being employed at TTG.

Teaching Staff

1(a) Have your perceptions changed regarding **student centredness** eg have you noticed any changes in the students' attitude to study or the success of student interaction with the learning environment. Have you perceived more or less disadvantages or trade-offs in the use of flexible learning systems?

1(b) Have your perceptions changed regarding whether the methodology is enabling students to acquire **enterprise skills**? Have they changed regarding the development of independence and also the employability of the student. What about the learning packages and clearly stated learning objectives?

1(c) Have there been any changes in the **learning resources** in your program area? In the availability, clarity and general usefulness of the learning materials? Has your view changed on whether you have sufficient time for involvement in learning material development?

Non-Teaching staff

1 Have your perceptions changed regarding

(a) the flexible learning systems at TTG are working

(b) whether your working environment is satisfying

(c) the working relationships between teaching and non-teaching staff

(d) the working relationships of teaching staff in various educational program areas

(e) the quality of students at TTG

All Staff

2 Would you like to make comment on any area of the summary of responses and/or on any other changes in your views since we last spoke that we haven't covered already?

B PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

All Staff

3 Can you give examples of the type of performance indicators used in your area?

4 What process did your area go through to establish its performance indicators?

5 What about the future? Do you envisage any changes in this process or in the performance indicators within the next two or three years?

C MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT

Teaching Staff or Open - check with interviewee

6 During the last 12 months have you been involved in material development or review? **IF YES GO TO Q 7, 9, 10, 11. IF NO GO TO Q8**

7 Have you received any staff development in flexible learning systems within your discipline area?

8 Are you anticipating being involved?

9 Can you comment on the process of developing and evaluating materials?

10 Can you comment on the student response to learner development material?

11 Can you comment on the staff response to material development?

Appendix R

Follow-up questionnaire staff 1993

NCVER/TTG STAFF FOLLOW UP QUESTIONNAIRE
OCTOBER 1993

This follow-up questionnaire is anonymous - please do not include your name. It is for ***all*** *staff - teaching, administrative and support, both full and part-time. We seek your opinion on any of the questions of interest to you. Please place the filled-in questionnaire in the NCVER box provided in the Staff Lounge by Monday 1 November 1993.*

please circle

FEMALE *or* **MALE** **TEACHING** *or* **NON-TEACHING**
Full/Frac/Part-time **Full/Frac/Part-time**

PROGRAM AREA: .....

DESIGNATED POSITION : .....
(optional)

If space allocated for your comments is insufficient, please feel free to attach extra sheets of your own, clearly identifying the question/s.

1 How have industrial issues, for example the roles of lecturers and lecturer assistants, or part-time staff, affected the TTG Campus operation?

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2 Can you comment about the recent focus by TTG Campus on integration of key competencies into learning guides? If yes, please elaborate.

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3 Do you consider that there is a place for structured tutorials and/or other 'traditional' methods of learning within the TTG Campus? Please elaborate.

.....

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4 What are your reactions to the statement that the flexible learning systems being used at TTG Campus present an alternative to the recessionary job market?

5 Do you see any correlation between the **reason** for the learner choosing TTG and their motivation towards open learning?

6 Please comment on the self-managing teams and flat management structure recently implemented at TTG Campus.

7 In your opinion is **gender** a factor in learner success within flexible learning systems at TTG Campus? Please elaborate.

8 Similarly do you consider that **age** (under 20, 20-30, over 30) is an issue in the learner success or otherwise of flexible learning systems at TTG Campus? Please elaborate.

9 What is your reaction to the following statement used in reference to the learner at TTG Campus.

TTG is user friendly but user abused.

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10 Can you make comment about facilitators having generic versus specialist skills in regard to subject offerings? If yes, please elaborate.

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11 Can you comment on the formation of the Torrens Valley Institute with regard to:

a) educational implications

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b) management implications

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.....

12 To what extent do departmental structures/systems assist or support the open learning environment?

|1 2 3 4 5|
poor excellent

13 How would you rate your degree of satisfaction with your role as facilitator/manager of the learning process?

|1 2 3 4 5|
poor excellent

14 During this past year how successful has the implementation of flexible learning systems been at TTG College?

|1 2 3 4 5|
poor excellent

15 Within your program area how would you rate the degree of success of flexible learning systems?

|1 2 3 4 5|
poor excellent

16 What level of enterprise skills will the graduating students take into the workplace?

|1 2 3 4 5|
poor excellent

17 Are enterprise skills being incorporated into the modules within your program area?

|1 2 3 4 5|
poor excellent

Thank you for your time. It is much appreciated.

Dr Ernst Hintz, Judi Pattinson, Dianne Thiele
NCVER Research Team

Appendix S

Some examples of specific performance indicators

The team will continually evaluate the modules to check their appropriateness and suitability for the client groups.

By x, the program will achieve a balanced budget outcome and have tendered for other funds.

Students enter and exit according to the self-paced needs rather than as a group.

Teaching workloads meet the guidelines.

To involve other institutes in trialing the learning packages.

Record the names and details of other institutes that contact us for information.

95% of student enquiries will be answered within 24 hours.

Cost per credit hour will be less than $x.

Achieve better than x credit hours.

Appendix T

1994 Team performance agreements: General format

Introduction

Statement of purpose

Composition of the team

Context

Core functions

Including a table listing courses to be offered, contact hours, staff (EFT), $ allocation, credit hours, total cost per credit hour, funding source.

The agreement

Initiatives

This section lists several goals. For each goal an objective is stated, strategies to achieve that goal are defined and then the performance indicator is stated.

Resource allocation

Staffing

Include a table which lists positions, occupant, annual salary and funding type.

Contingencies

For example: books and materials, printing and photocopying, stationery, materials and minor equipment, travel and accommodation, motor vehicle use etc.

Equipment/furniture/minor works

Staff development

Conference/workshop attendance, industry update/work placement, team building, advanced technology training, RPL, etc.

Learning materials/curriculum development

List particular modules which need to be written/revised, video and computer-assisted learning development.